EL GRECO, GOYA, AND THE SUBLIME

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

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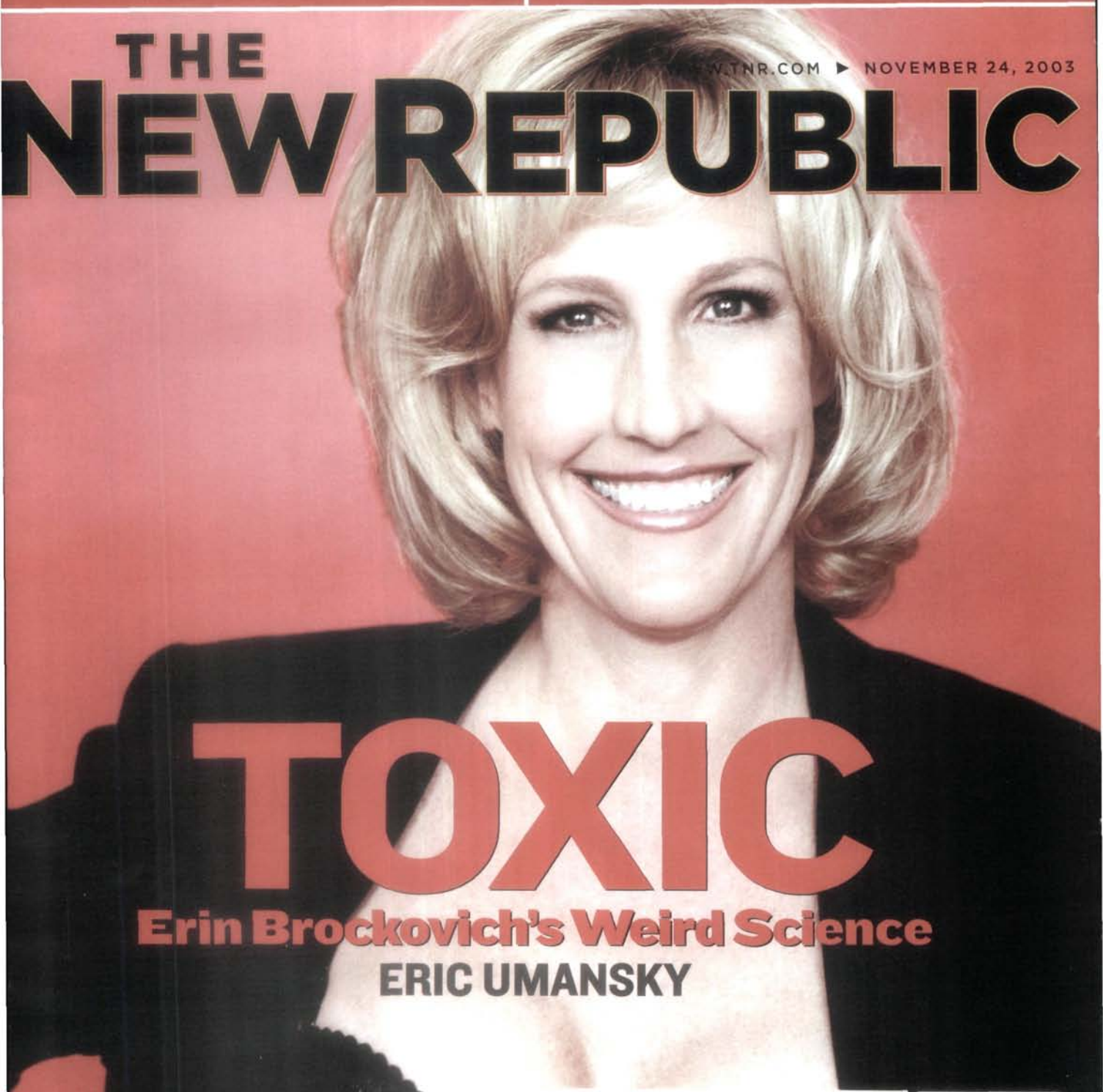

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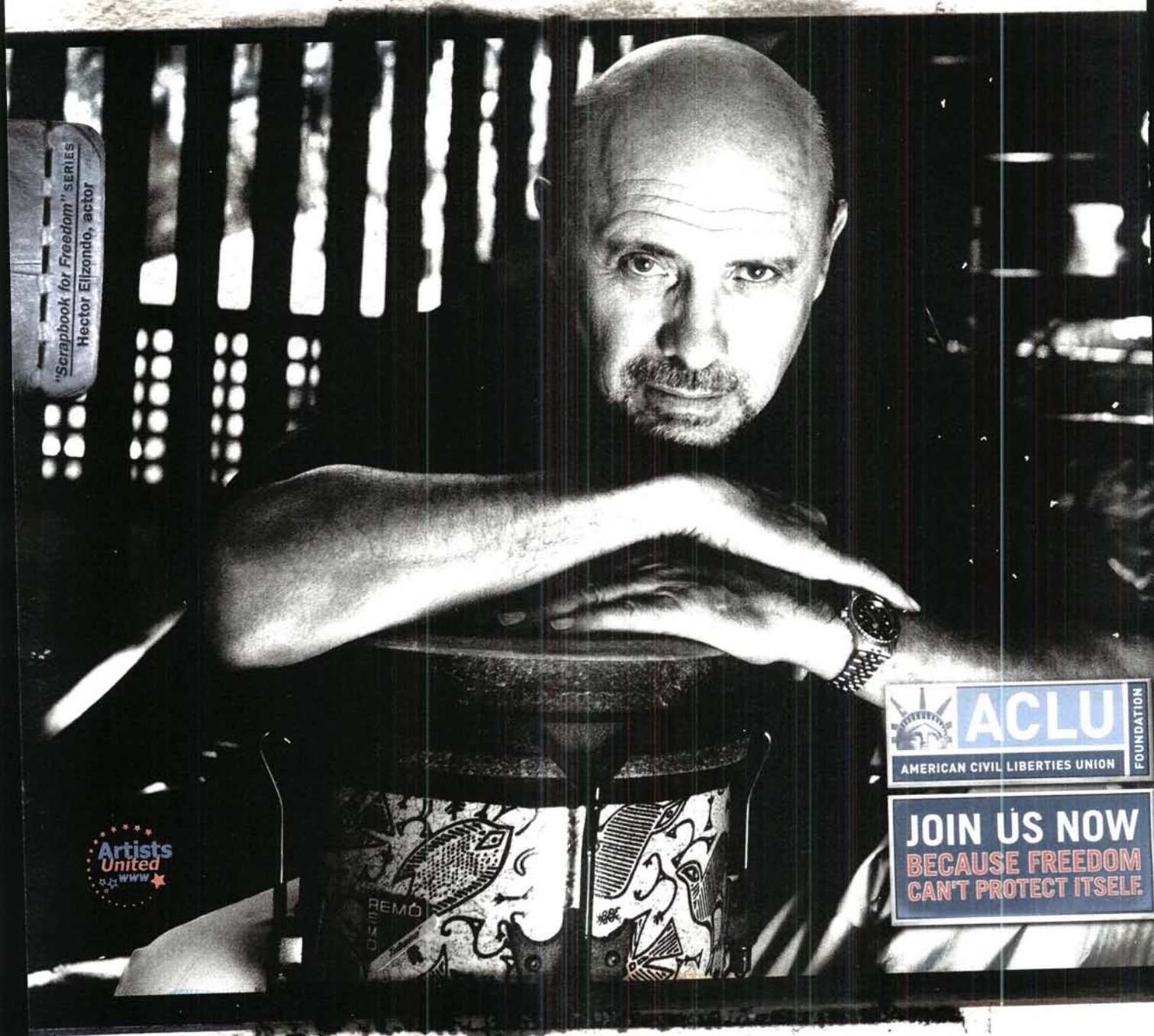
I AM NOT AN AMERICAN

WHO "WILL CUT THE CLOTH OF MY CONSCIENCE TO FIT THIS YEAR'S FASHIONS."[1]



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1 Lillian Hellman, from testimony before The Senate Committee on Un-American Activities, 1952

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THE NEW REPUBLIC
A JOURNAL OF POLITICS AND THE ARTS

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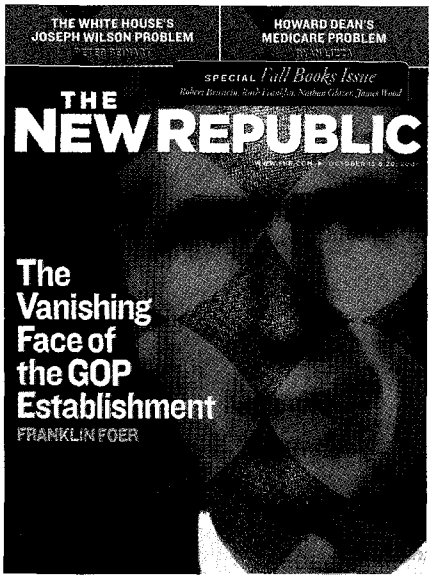
THE WHITE HOUSE'S JOSEPH WILSON PROBLEM
HOWARD DEAN'S MEDICARE PROBLEM
SPECIAL Fall Books Issue
THE NEW REPUBLIC
The Vanishing Face of the GOP Establishment
FRANKLIN FOER

CHURCH CHAT

FRANKLIN FOER'S COVER STORY, "What it Takes," wrongly describes the controversy regarding the Democrats' blockade of Bush judicial nominee Bill Pryor (October 13 & 20). First, Foer's assertion that Judiciary Committee Democrats "never brought up Pryor's faith at his confirmation hearing" and didn't even know his faith until Orrin Hatch asked Pryor about it is plainly incorrect. Hatch asked about Pryor's religion only toward the end of the hearing after Pryor had been hammered repeatedly about his religious views. Charles Schumer framed the issue in his opening statement: "When it comes to the separation of church and state, we have to be concerned as well. ... I personally am a deeply religious man. ... But the comments the attorney general has made ... are troubling." Dick Durbin charged that "you have opened up a long series of questions related to the Establishment Clause. It is one thing to say that we have the freedom to practice; it is another thing to say that we condone by government action certain religious belief." Ted Kennedy said there was an issue "whether you have an agenda, that many of the positions which you have taken reflect not just an advocacy but a very deeply held view." It was after these and other comments that Hatch asked Pryor about his religious denomination.

Second, Foer asserts the Committee for Justice (CFJ) ad labels Senate Democrats as anti-Catholic "bigots," an accusation that he says must be false as several Judiciary Democrats are Catholics themselves. But the CFJ's charge is not that any senator is anti-Catholic; it is that the Democrats, by attacking religious beliefs as violating the separation of church and state and the Establishment Clause, have created a religious test that would be hard for a devout Catholic judicial nominee to meet. The CFJ is not alone: The United League of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America were "profoundly troubled" that the committee's approach is blocking persons of faith from serving as judges; and Ray Flynn, Bill Clinton's ambassador to the Vatican, has explicitly accused the Democrats of "anti-Catholic bigotry." Foer never asked me about the ads, so I never had the opportunity to make these points in the interview.

C. BOYDEN GRAY
Committee for Justice
Washington, D.C.

FRANKLIN FOER REPLIES:
Gray says I never asked him about his ads. This isn't true. We discussed them briefly in our interview, and Sean Rushton, the executive director of the CFJ, explained Gray's position to me at length. Gray accuses Democrats of injecting religion into the Pryor debate. But I think the quotes he cites speak for themselves. They hardly suggest "religious tests for public office" that would prevent Catholics from becoming judges. Using Gray's standard, you could almost never question a nominee's position on the Establishment Clause, an essential constitutional question, without lapsing into bigotry. Next, he denies ever accusing the Democrats of anti-Catholic bigotry. But consider Gray's ad: It shows closed doors marked "Judicial Chambers." A sign on the doors reads CATHOLICS NEED NOT APPLY. Under this image, the text reads, "Some in the U.S. Senate are attacking Bill Pryor for having 'deeply held' Catholic beliefs to prevent him from becoming a federal judge."

RELIGIOUS RIGHT

JERUSALEM MAYOR URI LUPOLIANSKI lives modestly, conveys integrity, exhibits a live-and-let-live attitude, and has worked to repair the breach between Jerusalem's haredi and secular communities. Sounds good to me, but it's apparently not enough to satisfy Yossi Klein Halevi or ultra-secular Israelis ("City of God," September 29).

What's the problem? Well, Lupolianski is haredi, you see, and haredim cannot be judged as individuals because "by definition, being haredi means sacrificing individuality for the community." But the bill of particulars Klein Halevi offers is quite weak. Lupolianski apparently consults often with a rabbi who is a spiritual leader to one-third of Jerusalem's population, which seems like a prudent thing for a mayor to do. And Lupolianski's refusal to intercede on behalf of cultural institutions in a financial bind because of government cutbacks must be viewed in the context of a government budget that threatens, in Klein Halevi's words, to bring "involuntary destitution" to the haredi community.

In the end, the case against Lupolianski boils down to an unwillingness to trust someone with religious beliefs to hold public office. In 1978, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down a Tennessee law that prohibited priests and ministers from serving in public office. The Court found that there was no evidence that people of faith are less faithful to their oaths of civil office than their secular counterparts, and, quoting James Madison, ruled it improper to punish "a religious profession with the privation of a civil right." Is it too much to ask of ultra-secular Israelis that Lupolianski be given that same consideration?

AVI SCHICK
Brooklyn, New York

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[illegible]

When Congress was considering whether to deregulate the cable industry seven years ago, cable companies promised to invest in new broadband technologies and services. And since cable was deregulated by the Telecommunications Act of 1996, the industry has invested over $75 billion, and cable customers are enjoying an avalanche of new home entertainment and information technologies.

A cable home is quite different from a non-cable home these days. It's more likely to have Video-On-Demand that puts people in complete control of their TV schedules. They can watch more of what they want, whenever they want, and with better quality. And they may be enjoying high-speed Internet service that leaves dial-up and DSL in the digital dust.

Add in the picture and sound clarity of high-definition TV as well as hundreds of new digital video and audio channels, and the totally wired home has arrived.

[illegible]

Cable has changed – and so have consumer attitudes. Consumers are enjoying the programming and services that cable offers more than ever before.

It's hard to overstate how cable has inspired television writers and directors. Channels like MTV, ESPN and The History Channel as well as shows like *Six Feet Under*, *Trading Spaces* and *SpongeBob SquarePants* have broken new ground.

Critics have responded. At this year's Emmy Awards, cable shows won Emmys in category after category – 78 winners in all. Same story earlier this year when the Peabodys and Golden Globes were announced.

And viewers are voting with their remotes. For the first time, more people are watching cable during primetime than the broadcast networks. And cable news channels account for 60% of all TV news viewership.

[illegible]

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To compare, the average monthly basic cable bill is about $40, less than what it costs to take a family of four to a night out at the movies. That's a pretty good deal.

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In the past seven years, the cable industry has undergone a major transformation. Today's cable companies are more consumer-focused than ever before. Customer satisfaction is on the rise.

It's all because deregulation enabled cable companies to invest in new technologies and services to become more competitive. And compete they do. They battle with the satellite dish companies for TV customers. They compete with the phone companies for Internet and phone service. And as they introduce time-shifting technologies, they go up against video stores.

These are the results of Congress deregulating the cable industry. Talk about impact. This is not the cable business of seven years ago. This is an industry that's on the move. On faster forward, if you will.

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Southern Man

TRB
FROM WASHINGTON

Al Sharpton lit into Howard Dean last week for saying he wanted to "be the candidate for guys with Confederate flags in their pickup trucks." And the press—perhaps irritated that Dean's grassroots following insulates him from its whims—eagerly joined in, eventually forcing him to apologize. But there was nothing to apologize for: Pandering to voters' racism is wrong, but trying to win racist voters with genuinely nonracial appeals is more than fine; it's necessary.

During the whole pseudo-scandal, in fact, Dean sounded only one false note. In his apology, he said his comments about guys with Confederate flags were meant to initiate a "painful" dialogue about race. "I started this discussion," he admitted, "in a clumsy way."

But Dean's comments weren't designed to start a discussion about race; they were designed to end one. Consider Dean's Confederate-flag line in context, as elaborated in his February 21 speech before the Democratic National Committee.

> I intend to talk about race during this election in the South. The Republicans have been talking about it since 1968 in order to divide us, and I'm going to bring us together. Because, you know what? White folks in the South who drive pickup trucks with Confederate-flag decals on the back ought to be voting with us, because their kids don't have health insurance, either, and their kids need better schools, too.

The first sentence of that paragraph contradicts the rest. Dean is saying that, since 1968, Republicans have used race to distract Southern whites from the economic self-interest—health care and better schools—that would lead them to vote Democratic. He isn't vowing to change Southern whites' views on race. Indeed, he's implicitly acknowledging that he can't convince the guys with pickup trucks to remove their Confederate-flag decals. Instead, he's vowing to turn their attention *away* from race and toward the pocketbook issues that might lead them into the Democratic camp.

During his apology, Dean insisted that "we must have the [racial] dialogue Bill Clinton promised us; we must continue that dialogue." But, his trivial race commission notwithstanding, Clinton is Dean's model for how to win Southern whites by guiding the political debate away from race. In 1988, Michael Dukakis—dogged by charges that he was soft on the Willie Hortons of the world—lost every Southern state. But, in 1992, Clinton carried Arkansas, Tennessee, Kentucky, Louisiana, and Georgia. In 1996, he lost Georgia but won Florida, an even greater prize.

He did it by taking race off the table. In 1992, then–Governor Clinton publicly embraced the death penalty—even returning to Arkansas from the campaign trail to execute a mentally retarded African American man. He also vowed to hire more police and build more jails. Then, in the run-up to his 1996 reelection bid, Clinton signed welfare reform, once again scandalizing his liberal base. By virtually eliminating crime and welfare as political issues, Clinton left Republicans unable to inject race into the political debate. (The near-full-employment economy of the '90s also reduced the political salience of affirmative action.) Having deracinated the political climate, Clinton won over a sizable minority of Southern whites with the very economic appeals Dean wants to employ now.

Dean's problem is that race isn't the only conversation he must quiet to make his economic message heard in Dixie. The Confederate flag is more than a racial symbol; it's a symbol of the culture war. And, even if Dean does tamp down the debate about race, his candidacy is likely to inflame the culture war enormously—with disastrous consequences south of the Mason-Dixon line.

Clinton made one high-profile push for gay rights: His effort to end the military's ban on openly gay servicemen and -women. And it contributed to the Democratic catastrophe in 1994. But, for the rest of Clinton's term, gay rights were not a major political issue. Today, however, the gay rights movement has grown more ambitious and, with the help of the courts, has placed gay marriage on the political agenda for the first time. Morally, gay marriage would be a triumph. But, politically, it is an impending disaster for Democrats, especially in the South, where polls show the most adamant opposition to the idea. And, while Republicans will try to hang the issue around the neck of any Democrat, Dean—the only governor to have signed a gay civil-unions bill—is the most vulnerable. Not only is Dean already the candidate most associated with gay marriage, he also has the most passionate, influential gay supporters (they played a key role in his early fund-raising success), which will make it hard for him to reject gay marriage as forcefully as Clinton did in 1996. It is a good bet that, even if the guys with Confederate-flag decals aren't inflamed by racial issues next fall, they'll be inflamed by the prospect of gay marriage.

The other thing Confederate-flag-wavers will certainly know about Dean by next November is that he opposed the war in Iraq. Clinton ran for president at a time when the public cared little about foreign policy. That helped him in the South, where foreign policy debates usually turn into referendums on toughness and patriotism, and Democrats are judged deficient in both. It may seem odd that people who fly a rebel flag consider themselves super-patriots, but, as Lawrence F. Kaplan noted in this space two weeks ago, foreign policy is today—as it was during Vietnam—part of the culture war ("Old Allies," November 10). And, on foreign policy, Dean and the Confederate-flag-wavers are on opposite sides. In Georgia in 2002, Vietnam veteran and triple-amputee Max Cleland couldn't overcome his party's September 11, 2001, problem and appeal to Southern whites on health care and education. If he failed, how can Dean possibly succeed?

The lesson that Clinton teaches—and today's Democrats refuse to learn—is that victory requires real ideological sacrifice. It's not enough just to talk to Southern whites about economics; you have to allay their cultural fears by taking at least some positions that northern liberals loathe. Dean's opposition to new federal gun control is a start, but it's not nearly enough. He shouldn't worry that Sharpton is angry at him. He should worry that Sharpton still isn't nearly angry enough. **PETER BEINART**

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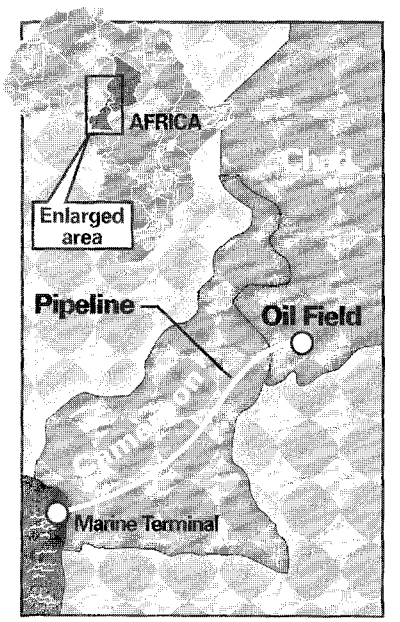
Voilà!

A new chapter in world energy markets opened in early October when the first cargo of crude oil from the African country of Chad was loaded onto a tanker off the coast of Cameroon.

The story behind that first cargo is worth the telling.

Oil was discovered 27 years ago in Chad, a landlocked country that is one of the world's poorest.



The Chad oil fields are about 650 miles from the ocean, and major upgrading of railways, roads and bridges was required to get the oil project materials on location. The pipeline route travels through environmentally and socially sensitive areas, including the rainforest in southern Cameroon and communities of Bakola pygmies near the coast. The route also lies in the area of the world with the highest exposure to malaria, and one of the highest rates of meningitis.

Chad was nearly the poorest country in Africa, and Cameroon was only moderately better off. Moreover, Chad suffered for many years from civil strife and armed rebellion, a condition that subsided only in the late 1990s.

The obstacles to oil development were so formidable that some of the early project participants dropped out, and were replaced by ChevronTexaco and Petronas in 2000.

But the oil offered hope for a better future, and a remarkable coalition of people and organizations eventually collaborated to make the Chad/Cameroon oil project a unique example of energy development.

ExxonMobil and the early project partners invited the World Bank to help fund a minority ownership in the pipeline — which represents about 40 percent of the project's cost — for the governments of Chad and Cameroon. The World Bank then assisted Chad in designing an unprecedented plan to ensure that oil revenues would contribute to poverty alleviation and an improved education system.

An extensive public consultation process in hundreds of villages, begun seven years prior to the start of construction, led to many project changes. The pipeline was routed to avoid villages and cultural sites and to protect biodiversity. People who, due to construction, faced losses of crops and plants used for medicinal purposes were provided compensation.

The project partners helped build schools, health clinics and community water wells. They also put in place extensive public health education programs focused on malaria and HIV/AIDS prevention. These efforts included distribution of 80,000 insecticide-treated bed nets.

Local employment soared as 35,000 workers were employed during the project's construction. More than $650 million was pumped into the local economies through 2,200 Chadian and Cameroonian companies.

And so with the first oil loaded, an extraordinary project begins to supply energy to the world as well as a better life and a cargo of hope to the people of Chad and Cameroon.

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ACTIONS AND ARRESTS

There is no question that the international community has been engaged in a fierce war with a shadow enemy since September 2001. Nations around the world recognize the responsibility not only to protect their own citizens from the threat of terrorism, but to protect the citizens of other countries as well. Every government has had to take a stand in the fight against evil. Often, the truth is hard to determine because terrorists hide behind so many flags.

As part of a public debate in the United States, Saudi Arabia has come under much scrutiny. While our leaders have clearly stated our position and denounced terrorism at every turn, we recognize that we will ultimately be judged not by our words, but by our deeds.

Since September 2001, Saudi Arabia has arrested more than 500 individuals with suspected ties to terrorism. Over the course of these arrests, Saudi security officers also seized large quantities of high explosives, automatic rifles, rocket launchers, tons of bomb-making materials and devices, false identity cards and documents, and large amounts of cash. Many security officers have been killed or injured in recent counter-terror activities.

Many of these actions and arrests have been highlighted in the world press, including:

• Yousif Salih Fahad Al-Ayeeri, a.k.a. Swift Sword, a major Al-Qaeda operational planner and fundraiser who was killed on May 31 while fleeing from a security patrol.

• Ali Abdulrahman Said Alfagsi Al-Ghamdi, a.k.a. Abu Bakr Al-Azdi, who surrendered to Saudi authorities. Al-Ghamdi, considered one of the top Al-Qaeda operatives in Saudi Arabia, is suspected of being one of the masterminds of the May 12 bombings in Riyadh.

• Turki Nasser Mishaal Aldandany, another top Al-Qaeda operative and mastermind of the May 12 bombings, who was killed on July 3, along with three other suspects in a gun battle with security forces that had them surrounded.

• The Ministry of Interior announced on July 21 that Saudi authorities had defused terrorist operations which were about to be carried out against vital installations and arrested 16 members of a number of terrorist cells after searching their hideouts in farms and houses in Riyadh Province, Qasim Province and the Eastern Province.

• Three men were arrested at a checkpoint in Al-Ka'akia district of Makkah on July 25 for possessing printed material that included a "religious edict" in support of terrorist acts against Western targets.

• Saudi security forces on July 28 killed six terrorist suspects and injured one more in a gunfight at a farm in Qasim Province, 220 miles north of the capital, Riyadh. Two Saudi security officers were killed and eight suffered minor injuries. Four people who harbored the suspects were arrested.

• Three clerics, Ali Fahd Al-Khudair, Ahmed Hamoud Mufreh Al-Khaledi and Nasir Ahmed Al-Fuhaid, were arrested after calling for support of the terrorists who carried out the Riyadh attacks.

As the War on Terrorism wages on, Saudi Arabia remains committed to rooting out and bringing to justice those who perpetrate such heinous acts.

"I vow to my fellow citizens, and to the friends who reside among us, that the State will be vigilant about their security and well-being. Our nation is capable, by the Grace of God Almighty and the unity of its citizens, to confront and destroy the threat posed by a deviant few and those who endorse or support them. With the help of God Almighty, we shall prevail."

Crown Prince Abdullah bin Abdulaziz,
May 13, 2003

"After the terrible attacks in Riyadh on May the 12th, the government of Saudi Arabia has intensified its longstanding efforts against the Al-Qaeda network...America and Saudi Arabia face a common terrorist threat, and we appreciate the strong, continuing efforts of the Saudi government in fighting that threat."

President George W. Bush,
July 1, 2003

THE PEOPLE OF SAUDI ARABIA
Allies Against Terrorism
www.saudiembassy.net

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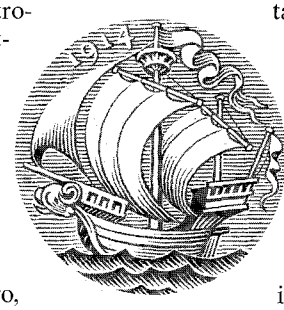
Crusade

IF A PROFOUND idea can be attributed to George W. Bush, a profound idea must now be attributed to him. In his address to the National Endowment for Democracy (NED)—an organization that was born in partisan strife two decades ago but has become one of the real glories of Washington—the president provided a thoughtful and stirring and momentous defense of the centrality of democratization to American foreign policy. It was a radical speech, and for once the radicalism of this administration did not seem small or sectarian. It contained arguments, not slogans; a sense of history, not a sense of politics. It was the credo of an idealist, but there was realism in it, too. The interesting question is whether the president grasps that the moral and strategic course that he set at NED may be at odds with the requirements of his own reelection. For Bush's international campaign is not exactly what Bush's domestic campaign has ordered.

The president committed the United States to the pursuit of democracy throughout the world—"in Cuba, and Burma, and North Korea, and Zimbabwe," a fine list of fiends, but especially in Iraq and in the Arab world. "Some skeptics of democracy," he said, "assert that the traditions of Islam are inhospitable to representative government. This cultural condescension, as Ronald Reagan termed it, has a long history," and Bush sharply rejected it. "Are the peoples of the Middle East somehow beyond the reach of liberty?" The president does not think so. "Every nation can start on this path" to democracy. Salaam, Huntington. Bush is right: Democracy means freedom for everyone or it means nothing at all. The unironic, unjaded construction of democracy is the correct one. Bush's speech was admirably devoid of world-weariness; it was, in fact, a quarrel with world-weariness. And it was not, in any responsible sense of the term, imperialistic. "As we watch and encourage reforms in the region, we are mindful that modernization is not the same as Westernization": Those are golden words, and the beginning of wisdom for democratizers everywhere.

The president made two arguments for his (we might as well call it what it is) crusade: a moral one, that democracy is superior to every other political order in every way that matters; and a practical one, that the security of democratic nations depends upon the spread of democracy. This, in his view, is one of the lessons of September 11, which was a catastrophe visited upon the United States by the detritus of the Saudi, Egyptian, and Yemeni autocracies. One of the most delightful consequences of Bush's speech is surely the unease that it must have provoked in Riyadh, Cairo, Damascus, and Tehran, all tyrannical capitals that have premised their policies upon Washington's time-honored wink.



We are not dewy-eyed in our enthusiasm for the president's analysis. We understand that democratization has now been promoted into the primary rationale for our struggle in Iraq as a result of the great embarrassment about weapons of mass destruction. And obviously the United States cannot contemplate launching Operation Iranian Freedom or Korean Freedom or Cuban Freedom or Zimbabwean Freedom: Democracy generally cannot be created at the point of a gun, though in some cases it depends where the gun is pointed. Most importantly, democratization is not exactly an exit strategy. Quite the contrary. Unlike the search for chemical and biological weapons, the search for democracy takes many, many years. Is Karl Rove telling the president that the American people's patience with our venture in Iraq is beginning to thin? Then he, too, will have been discomfited by his boss's vision. For in the short (and even the medium) term, democratization is the same as destabilization. It involves the dismantling of whole political cultures. Democracy has always been attended by birth pangs—in the West, too. If a liberal dispensation will indeed be established in the Arab societies, it will not be done easily, swiftly, in conformity with an American notion of efficiency, or with a perfect understanding of the intellectual and political demands of the task; and it will not be done peacefully. Nor is there any certainty that American values may not become cynically manipulated by American interests: We are not exactly saints.

And yet there is no greater test of the faith in freedom than the attempt to demonstrate, by means of historical action, that it is indeed universal. This attempt will justify America's philosophy and America's power. (Such a measure of power always requires justification.) And who really believes, with the exception of Henry Kissinger, that a world with only a little democracy is any safer, any better? ■

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NOTEBOOK

McAuliffe's Road to Ruin . . . Bush's River of Waste

DEBATE OVER

EARLIER THIS MONTH, TERRY McAuliffe, chairman of the Democratic National Committee (DNC), appeared before Washington Democrats at an annual Beltway confab known as the Kennedys-King dinner. How did this partisan crowd greet their leader a year before Election Day? They booed him. And this was three days *before* McAuliffe's DNC watched helplessly as the party lost two more governorships on November 4.

Perhaps the audience was thinking ahead to another event—namely, last week's debate among Democratic presidential contenders in Boston. Sponsored by Rock the Vote, it was easily the most entertaining of the intramural smackdowns to date. But it was so entertaining precisely because it was also the most juvenile and embarrassing. Along with the kind of racial demagoguery we've been expecting from Al Sharpton all along, the debate showcased Joe Lieberman apologizing for the fact that he never smoked pot. Another highlight was the spectacle of several candidates musing about who they'd most like to "party" with. If you happened to be a normal person tuning in for the first time to look for a credible alternative to George W. Bush, you were probably aghast. Surely the night's biggest winner was Richard Gephardt, who had the good sense to be somewhere else.

Why is this McAuliffe's fault? Because the debates have been a millstone around the necks of the serious candidates for months. Nothing increases the stature gap between Bush and folks like Gephardt, Howard Dean, John Edwards, and John Kerry more than throwing them on stage with the likes of Sharpton and Dennis Kucinich week after week. (And that's not to mention all the great material the candidates have produced for future Republican attack ads.) The debates should be reserved for candidates who are running credible campaigns for president. Sharpton, Kucinich, and Carol Mosely Braun don't meet that test. Somebody should have given these three the hook long ago, and that somebody is McAuliffe.

Terry McAuliffe

Operatives at many campaigns speculate that he has avoided the issue because it would mean excluding the only black candidates in the race. If so, it's just one more reason why McAuliffe has turned out to be particularly ill-suited to his current job. He is hobbled by the fact that he got his post by outmaneuvering a black rival, the late Maynard Jackson, thereby aggravating racial tensions at the DNC. Then, earlier this year, McAuliffe angered other black Democratic leaders when he tried to fire ten black DNC staffers.

But there are still a few debates left. If McAuliffe can't do the right thing, he should step aside so somebody else can. The eventual Democratic nominee is going to have enough to worry about next year. He needs a DNC chief who can help him. The current occupant is doing the reverse.

THE YOUNG AND THE FECKLESS

SPEAKING OF THE BOSTON DEBATE, perhaps no question reflected the seemingly vapid intellect of today's youth better than one posed by Alexandra Trustman, about whether candidates preferred "Macs or PCs." But wait—just who was being vapid here? As *Washington Post* media columnist Howard Kurtz reported, Trustman set the record straight in a column she wrote for her college newspaper, *The Brown Daily Herald*: "I was called the morning of the event and asked by the executive producer of the show if I would ask a question at the forum." Then, upon arrival, "I was handed a note card with the Macs or PCs version of Clinton's boxers or briefs question." Trustman says she had the good sense to doubt the question's relevance and proposed an alternative, only to have the producer nix it. "He . . . told me I couldn't ask it because it wasn't light-hearted enough." CNN subsequently admitted as much and apologized, saying a producer "clearly went too far" in trying to give the event more levity. So there's hope for America's youth after all—as long as they don't watch too much CNN.

ALL WET

WE RECENTLY REPORTED ON THE environmental fiasco unfolding on the Missouri River, where the Bush administration was groping for a way to ignore the mountain of solid science calling for major changes in the river's flows. During the 2000 campaign, President Bush had pledged to preserve the status quo on the river, thereby sucking up to powerful farm interests and barge operators in the swing state of Missouri. Since then, his administration had

DAVID COWLES

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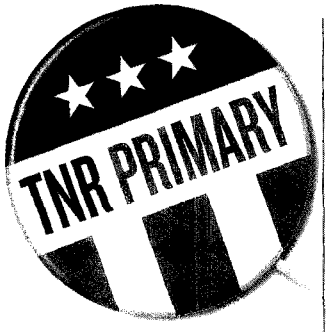
worked hard to keep that promise at the expense of the science, at one point even defying a federal judge's order for immediate flow changes.

But there was just one problem: The Fish and Wildlife Service is one of the arbiters of the Endangered Species Act. Its team of biologists remained convinced that flow changes were needed to prevent the extinction of endangered pallid sturgeons, least terns, and piping plovers. And they're not the only ones who reached this conclusion: The National Academy of Sciences has endorsed the team's findings.

Now the administration has solved that pesky problem. On October 29, Assistant Interior Secretary Craig Manson sent an internal memo replacing the team of Service biologists that had been working on the Missouri River for more than a decade. Henceforth, Manson announced, the final decision on flow changes would be made by a "SWAT team" run out of the Service's Albuquerque division, a team of "Wise Guys" with no experience on the Missouri. A classic of the genre, Manson's memo also expressed his "appreciation and thanks" for the "talented employees" whose "hard work" he was trying to bury: "I understand that the Service's other important projects, including issues in the Platte River Basin, now require their attention."

Oh, sure. The biologists weren't removed from one of the most explosive environmental battles facing the middle of the country because they've told other agencies (and THE NEW REPUBLIC) that the case for flow changes is stronger than ever. They were removed because they're needed on "other important projects." Last month, Manson assured us that, regardless of presidential campaign promises, the Service's Missouri River biologists would be free to make scientific decisions without any political interference. He just forgot to mention that they'd be making those decisions about the Platte. ■



GOING SOFT
Candidate: Wesley Clark
Category: Foreign Policy
Grade: D

In the November 4 Rock the Vote debate, Wesley Clark made a historical assertion that rivals Gerald Ford's insistence in 1976 that Eastern Europe was not under Soviet domination. "The way we won the cold war," Clark declared, "was not by isolating Eastern Europe but by engaging it. We won the cold war not just because we had great armed forces but because we had the AFL-CIO, we had Citibank, and we had a Polish pope."

Clark may be right about the roles that the AFL-CIO and the pope played in winning the cold war. But Citibank? Economic isolation is precisely the tactic that the United States employed toward Eastern Europe in the second half of the twentieth century. This was true beginning in the late '40s, when President Truman angered American industrialists by instituting export controls against the Soviet bloc, all the way through to the cold war's last decade, when President Reagan defied the U.S. Chamber of Commerce by wielding economic sanctions against the Soviet Union and Poland. The Soviet bloc did not collapse because the United States was "engaging it." If anything, it collapsed because the United States was starving it.

This isn't the first time that Clark has exaggerated the potential of free markets to spread democracy around the world. His new book, *Winning Modern Wars*, drones on endlessly about the magical qualities of "interdependence" and "soft power." They're all fine ideas, to be sure, but no match for hard power when it comes to confronting totalitarian and authoritarian regimes. That's something the man who led the Kosovo campaign certainly ought to know.

—Lawrence F. Kaplan

NO MORE MR. NICE GUY
Candidate: John Kerry
Category: Intellectual Honesty
Grade: D

"I don't want to make any characterizations [about Howard Dean]. I wish my campaign were not making characterizations of people publicly, and I don't like that."—John Kerry, appearing on NBC's "Meet the Press," August 31, 2003

"Now, Mr. Change-Your-Opinion-for-Expediency is saying, 'Oh, I'm now able to raise money. Maybe we should get out of the system.' I think somewhere along the line, fundamental principles are important."—John Kerry, quoted in *The Washington Post*, November 9

—Michael Crowley

APPEARANCES CAN BE DECEIVING
Candidate: John Edwards
Category: Intellectual Honesty
Grade: C

More than a year after a famously unsteady appearance as Tim Russert's guest on "Meet the Press," John Edwards returned and showed a new confidence. Unfortunately, he also showed flashes of a new opportunism that has marked his campaign in recent months.

At one point, Russert confronted Edwards with a statement he made in September about the president's appropriations bill for postwar Iraq: "We have young men and women in a shooting gallery over [in Iraq] right now. It would be enormously irresponsible for any of us not to do what's necessary to support them," Edwards said at the time, adding, "I will vote for what needs to be there to support our troops that are on the ground." Edwards, of course, not only wound up voting against the $87 billion plan; he actually ran ads attacking it. His explanation? Edwards didn't want to vote for a "blank check"—never mind that the bill specified, in great detail, just how the money would be spent.

Russert also dredged up one of the most wrongheaded—and overlooked—votes Edwards has cast as a senator. Although he trashes the Bush tax cut today, back in 2001 Edwards was one of a handful of Democrats to support a Senate budget plan that made room for a $1.2 trillion tax cut. Edwards argues that, while he supported the dollar figure of the tax cut, he wanted to give it to the middle class and opposed its eventual tilting to the very rich. But that's hooey. At the time, everyone knew precisely how the GOP-controlled Congress would allocate that money—and that $1.2 trillion was an irresponsibly large sum. Confidence is all well and good, but it is no substitute for principle.

—Michael Crowley

For primary items updated daily and complete candidate rankings, visit *www.tnr.com/primary*.

CARICATURES BY ZACH TRENHOLM

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Campaign Journal

Outside In

BY RYAN LIZZA

IT IS EASY to think the presidential race has reached a tipping point. One week, assured by his supporters that they will raise all the money he needs, Howard Dean skips out of the restrictive federal matching-funds system. The next, he formally accepts the endorsements of the two most politically powerful unions in the country: the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees. And soon, according to an aide, his campaign will unveil a group of foreign policy luminaries who had been advising several candidates but have recently decided to back only Dean. The Dean campaign seems to be shedding the last vestiges of insurgency, aiming to build a sense of inevitability and end the race early with decisive victories in Iowa and New Hampshire, like Al Gore in 2000.

But, for all of his newfound respectability, the buzz from numerous Washington Democrats in the wake of Dean's extraordinary two weeks has been a hardening of opposition rather than a cascade of previously reluctant supporters endorsing the governor. "My sense is that this isn't tipping anyone towards Dean," says a top Beltway Democrat with ties to the Dean campaign. "The overwhelming majority here in Washington are *more* worried." Instead of consolidating support within the party establishment, Dean is polarizing it.

THE DIVISION IN the party over Dean is less about ideology than about power. Three years after Bill Clinton left office, he and Hillary still control what remains of a Democratic establishment. Terry McAuliffe, the chairman of the Democratic National Committee (DNC), was installed by Clinton. Most of the powerful new fund-raising groups, known as 527s, and the new think tanks, such as the Center for American Progress, are run by the best and brightest of the Clinton administration. As *National Journal* noted in a detailed look at what it called "Hillary Inc.," the senator's network of fund-raising organizations "has begun to assume a quasi-party status." And some of the best Clinton talent is heavily invested in non-Dean campaigns, especially Joe Lieberman's (Mandy Grunwald and Mark Penn), John Edwards's (Bruce Reed), and Wesley Clark's (Bruce Lindsey, Eli Segal, and Mickey Kantor).

Dean, by contrast, has come to represent the party's anti-establishment forces. While the other candidates, especially former self-styled front-runner John Kerry, started the campaign by wooing party leaders, Dean built a grassroots army first—in part by bashing D.C. Democrats and their disastrous 2002 election strategy—and is only now leveraging his fund-raising power to win over establishment types. No Democrats closely associated with the Clintons are working for the Dean campaign. In fact, it's hard to find a Clintonite who speaks favorably of the former Vermont governor. This evident schism is not just about Dean's opposition to the war—or even his prospects in the general election. It's a turf war to decide who will control the future of the party.

This struggle is playing out in several of the party's organizations and constituencies. Indeed, Dean's high-profile labor endorsements—the cornerstone of the tipping-point argument—actually emphasize the party's divisions. Andy Stern, the leader of SEIU, is to the labor movement what Dean is to the Democratic Party—an anti-establishment reformer. When the AFL-CIO failed to adopt reforms recommended by Stern earlier this year, he started a breakaway organization—the New Unity Partnership—with several other unions that is now seen as a major challenge to the AFL-CIO establishment. And SEIU is a lot like the Dean campaign. It's the fastest-growing union and one of the most democratically run. It's obsessed with organizing new members to whom it imparts a message of empowerment, unlike the more centralized AFL-CIO. Stern and SEIU, with their emphasis on health care instead of globalization, are the future of the labor movement in the United States, while the industrial unions, which back Dick Gephardt and have been bleeding members for years as they fight an uphill battle against free trade, are the past. SEIU's backing of Dean isn't a nod from the establishment—it's a protest against it.

The Dean split is mirrored in the centrist New Democrat movement as well. No organization has been more hostile to Dean than the Democratic Leadership Council (DLC). In May, Al From and Bruce Reed, the chairman and the president of the DLC—the group that served as a policy springboard for Clinton's rise—wrote their now-infamous manifesto warning that nominating Dean, whom they view as hopelessly left-wing, would bring certain defeat for Democrats in 2004. But, for months, another prominent New Democrat has been making a different case. Simon Rosenberg, who cut his teeth on Clinton's 1992 campaign and now heads the New Democrat Network (NDN), sees Dean as the most innovative and potentially transformative Democrat since Clinton himself. Like Stern, Rosenberg is a bit of a rebel within his own movement. He once worked for From, but his organization is now challenging the DLC and is becoming an increasingly influential player in Democratic politics. Unlike the more top-down DLC, NDN is building a grassroots network of donors and has become a key player in the new world of 527s. "NDN has not endorsed Dean or embraced him, but we have given our opinion that this is a serious campaign that is going to change the party," says Rosenberg.

As the party's split into Deaniacs and anti-Dean Clintonites unfolds, one of the most intriguing subplots concerns the machinations of Gore. Immediately after the Florida recount was decided in 2000, Gore's senior aides were purged from the DNC and Clinton's were installed. Some ex-Gore staffers are still bitter about the coup, and several express

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admiration for what Dean is doing.

The two men have a strained history, but lately Gore is sounding more and more like Dean. His three most important speeches since leaving office have been harsh attacks on President Bush's Iraq policy and his abuse of the Patriot Act. The two most recent were delivered before MoveOn.org, the Internet network for grassroots liberals, which is overwhelmingly pro-Dean. Some suspect that, just as Dean went outside the Beltway and built his own high-tech grassroots army to bypass the sclerotic D.C. establishment, so is Gore. It's not a bad way for him to exercise influence in the party, if he wants to make a potential endorsement more powerful or if he still harbors hopes of running for president in 2008. "The rest of the Democratic infrastructure is controlled by the Clintons," says one top Democrat.

Perhaps Gore would not endorse the former Vermont governor (though Joe Trippi, Dean's campaign manager, says "they talk relatively regularly"). Regardless, he'll have to choose sides, because the Democrats are splitting into two parties: the party of Clinton, and the party of Dean. ■

Black Mountain Dispatch

Flag Poll

BY JASON ZENGERLE

KIRK LYONS DOESN'T own a pickup truck, but his Toyota Camry sports a Confederate-flag bumper sticker. He flies a real Confederate flag at his home on Confederate Memorial Day and Robert E. Lee's birthday. And the flag isn't just a personal cause for Lyons. It's professional. A lawyer here in western North Carolina, Lyons runs the Southern Resource Legal Center (SRLC)—a self-described "Civil Rights Law Firm for Confederate Southern Americans" that provides legal representation to people who have been forbidden from displaying Confederate flags at their workplaces or schools. So, when Howard Dean told an Iowa reporter last month that he wanted to be "the candidate for guys with Confederate flags in their pickup trucks," Lyons took note. "When I heard what [Dean] said, my ears perked up," Lyons recalls as he sits in the apartment—cluttered with paperwork and Confederate paraphernalia—that serves as the SRLC's office. "I said, 'Here's a guy that's a little different from your average Democrat.' "

Never mind that Lyons doesn't like Dean's positions on abortion, guns, and gay civil unions. Or that he also disagrees with Dean over the pocketbook issues—health care, the economy—that the former Vermont governor thinks will resonate with white working-class voters in the South. If Dean actually wanted the support of Confederate-flag-fliers, Lyons says, then Dean would have his vote. "It would be enough for me," Lyons explains, "seeing as how almost everybody else on the political spectrum is against ... Confederate symbols in the national marketplace of ideas."

But Lyons won't be hosting a Dean Meetup anytime soon. After hearing Dean's apology for his Confederate-flag remarks, in which he labeled the flag "loathsome" and "racist," Lyons could only shake his head. "If he had stuck by his guns without waffling and without the inevitable apologies and mea culpas and breast-beating and all that, I think that he would have a good shot at picking up a lot of conservative white voters in the South," he says. "Dean basically showed that he doesn't have courage. The gratuitous insults to the Confederate flag are what turned me against him."

Of course, Lyons isn't your typical Confederate-flag-flier. For one thing, it's pretty much his defining issue. For another, the Southern Poverty Law Center and other groups allege that Lyons is a prominent white supremacist. (Lyons has denied the charge.) But, if Lyons isn't emblematic of Confederate-flag devotees, who is? The answer may be ... nobody.

WHEN DEAN SAID he wanted to be the candidate of guys with Confederate flags in their pickup trucks, he employed the image to symbolize working-class Southern whites. But it was a bad symbol to use—not just because of its racial overtones, but because it isn't very accurate. A 1993 poll by the Odum Institute for Research in Social Science at the University of North Carolina found that, while nearly three out of four Southerners considered the Confederate flag a symbol of regional heritage and pride—rather than a symbol of racial conflict—only 11 percent of Southerners actually owned a Confederate flag. And it's a good bet that an even smaller minority displays it. As the University of North Carolina's John Shelton Reed, the eminent Southern sociologist who helped conduct the survey, says, "I've got a picture on the wall of the famous 'Lost Cause' print of Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson's last meeting. But it's in my study, not in my dining room, because I don't want to have to explain it."

Indeed, tracking down actual Confederate flags requires some effort. While my hometown of Chapel Hill has plenty of DEAN FOR AMERICA bumper stickers, I can't find any cars with Confederate flags there. And even after I leave Chapel Hill's liberal oasis to go on my 200-mile drive along Interstate 40 to Black Mountain, where Lyons lives, I spot only three vehicles—two pickups and one horse-trailer—with Confederate-flag stickers or license plates. In and around Black Mountain, I cruise a couple of shopping-mall parking lots and a trailer park and find no flags at all. When I ask Lyons for places to find more flag-wavers, even he seems a bit stumped. He has to call a friend, Rick, who suggests I go to Smiley's Flea Market, located about 20 miles southwest in a small town called Fletcher. "You'll see

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Where We Stand

THE AFT ON CRITICAL ISSUES

ENLISTING PROGRAMS THAT WORK

Schools on U.S. military bases use proven strategies that are helping to close the achievement gap.

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Involved parents often volunteer as tutors and mentors in base school classrooms.

Every weekday, more than 102,000 young Americans in grades K-12 go to school on military bases in the U.S. and abroad. Students attending these public schools operated by the Department of Defense Education Activity aren't children of privilege. Half are eligible for free or reduced-price lunches. Few of their parents have more than a high school education, 49 percent are from minority groups, and up to one-third of the students leave during the year because their parents move. Nevertheless, these schools are posting high levels of academic success and are closing the achievement gap.

Fourth and eighth grade students in Department of Defense (DoD) schools scored at, or near, the top in last year's National Assessment of Educational Progress reading and math tests. African-American students in DoD schools scored an average of 31 points higher on their verbal SATs than their civilian counterparts and 21 points higher on their math SATs last year. Ninety-four percent of DoD students graduate, and most go to college.

Why the difference?

Clearly, DoD schools enjoy some built-in advantages—parental involvement is required for most service members, for example, and per-pupil funding is $3,500 above the national average.

Fundamentally, however, their winning formula rests on consistently using the same proven ingredients that make most other successful schools work—high standards, good discipline, quality tests linked to a rigorous curriculum, wide availability of quality preschool, and well-prepared and respected teachers. This foundation, already working in many urban public schools, is the centerpiece of DoD schools' success. It's the right strategy for *all* our schools.

FACTS:

Department of Defense schools share many of the hallmarks of other high-performing public schools, including:

- ***A standards-based program** that sets the same goals for all students but provides flexibility in how to teach the material.*
- ***Regular testing** closely tied to the curriculum.*
- ***Well-prepared teachers.** Unlike many high-poverty urban schools, DoD schools have few uncertified teachers, and they provide ongoing professional development to help teachers update their skills and knowledge.*

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some flags at Smiley's," Rick assures me.

Although Smiley's bills itself as "The South's Largest 'Yard Sale,' " it's not exactly crawling with emblems of the Confederacy: In my first half-hour there, I see more Mexican flags than Confederate ones. But I do eventually find a store that sells Confederate flags amid an assortment of glass pipes and *Playboy* back issues. A grizzled, tattooed man named Gilbert Johnson is working behind the counter—it's his sister-in-law's shop, he explains—and he has his own baseball cap with a Confederate-flag design. Johnson says he was born in Buffalo and that, even though he moved down South about 30 years ago, he's not that interested in Southern heritage. So why does he wear the hat? "I hang out in biker bars," he says. "It's a rebel thing." I ask Johnson if he has heard about Dean's Confederate-flag remarks, and he shakes his head. I ask him if he's heard of Dean. He says no. "I've got no use for politics," he tells me. "It's all a money game." He adds, "The best president we ever had was Nixon—and they impeached his ass."

A few stalls down from Johnson's sister-in-law's setup is a shop called "Southern Heritage," which sells Confederate flags and concrete lawn ornaments. It's empty save for a soft-spoken, slightly effeminate man named Robbie, who's minding the store for the owners. Robbie says that he doesn't really know much about the Confederate flags, other than that they don't seem to sell as well as the lawn ornaments. As for Howard Dean and politics in general, he pleads ignorance on that, too. "I'm countrified," he apologizes. "I do like President Bush," he says, "because he's a Christian."

Not satisfied with the sampling of opinion at Smiley's, I call Lyons's friend Rick to ask him if he has any more suggestions. He tells me he's going to get in touch with some friends—"just some regular guys with Confederate flags"—to see if they'd be available to talk, and later he gives me the phone number of a man named Jeff Cordell. I call Cordell, who says to meet him the next morning at the Western Sizzlin restaurant in Marion, about 20 miles east of Black Mountain. "I'll be the guy waiting out front next to the black pickup truck with the Confederate flag," he advises me.

Cordell brings a friend, David Padgett, who drives a red pickup truck with a Confederate-flag license plate, and we sit down in a back room of the Western Sizzlin just before the after-church crowd arrives. Cordell and Padgett are both members of the Sons of Confederate Veterans, and, over steaks and fries, they tell me they display the flag to honor their ancestors who fought in the War of Northern Aggression. ("We don't say the C.W. word," Cordell whispers.) "White people who fly it to offend someone need better education about what the flag stands for," Cordell says. "And I don't see how blacks, if they are educated to see that it's a Christian symbol, could still think it's a problem."

Both men are angry with Dean for his Confederate-flag remarks. Cordell believes Dean's original comment was condescending: "I think when he said it, he meant it in a broad, stereotypical, good-old-boy, redneck, hillbilly way. The way Dean thinks of us, we're just white trash." Padgett is angry about the way Dean eventually denounced the flag: "He done offended me." But, as we talk about Dean and what he was trying to say when he uttered his line about the Confederate flag, the two men soften. I read them a quote from Dean, in which he talks about the many Southern white children who don't have health insurance and who go to bad public schools. "We have had Southern, white working people voting Republican for thirty years, and they've got nothing to show for it," I tell them Dean said. They both nod. Padgett, who works at a Broyhill furniture factory, says his company has recently closed three plants and that he'd support a politician who stanched the flow of jobs to Mexico and China. Cordell says, "I'll vote for whichever candidate has a record of trying to improve health care, education, and the economy. Those are the three biggies for me."

So, I interject, it sounds like the two men could vote for someone like Dean. After all, he's saying he'll fix the problems they care about most. But Cordell and Padgett aren't buying it. "If he lived down here and sent his kids to the schools, that would mean a lot to me," Cordell says. "But how does someone from up North know what the South's problems are? He hasn't walked a mile in our shoes." So does Dean have any chance of being the candidate for guys with Confederate flags in their pickup trucks? I ask. Cordell snorts. "He's got about a snowball's chance in Alabama." ■

Bouaké Dispatch

No Way Out

BY JEREMY KAHN

It is an afternoon so hot and humid that even the ubiquitous flies seem reluctant to take to the air. A French patrol clad in jungle fatigues advances warily up a dusty, rubbish-strewn lane. Nearby, their comrades try to stay cool as they guard the local branch of the West African Central Bank. They watch as motley bands of heavily armed teenagers cruise past. This is Bouaké, a ramshackle city in central Côte d'Ivoire that was once home to more than half a million people. Today, it is the headquarters of the rebel movement that, over the past year, has torn this nation in two.

French troops have been in Bouaké for a little over a month. The rebels invited them in to help restore order after shooting broke out during an attempted robbery at the bank French troops now guard. Twenty-three people were killed in the melee, but the city has been quiet since the French

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arrived. "Things have been getting better," says Colonel Daniel Puente, commander of the French forces. "The security is improving." It is yet another small victory for Licorne, "unicorn" in French, the name by which the French army's 4,000-strong deployment to its former colony is known. In September 2002, a group of Ivorian military officers, fed up with what they saw as an escalating government campaign of discrimination against northerners and immigrants, attempted to oust President Laurent Gbagbo, who draws his support primarily from the Christian south. The abortive coup in Abidjan, the commercial capital, turned into outright civil war, and, within days, French troops arrived to help evacuate Westerners. They stayed to set up blocking positions between the government and rebel armies, using deadly force when necessary. Throughout the ensuing months, France launched a diplomatic effort to secure a peace agreement that called for the creation of a power-sharing government while its soldiers worked to help establish a demilitarized "zone of confidence" between the combatants.

France's robust military and diplomatic intervention here is credited with preventing Côte d'Ivoire's civil war—which has displaced close to one million—from devolving into the kind of bloodletting witnessed in nearby Liberia. "If the French wouldn't have stepped in, we would have seen a destruction of that country," says Princeton Lyman, senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations. In fact, France's supposed success in Côte d'Ivoire is frequently cited by those who argue for more substantial U.S. peacekeeping efforts in Liberia. Some have gone so far as to suggest that France's willingness to risk its soldiers to rescue an imploding African state represents a new model for how the West should respond to future civil wars. "African solutions to African problems boils down to the guns talk," says Chester Crocker, an Africa expert at Georgetown University. "The French have said it won't be done that way in Ivory Coast."

There is little doubt that French intervention has saved lives, at least in the short term. But, if France has succeeded in stopping the Côte d'Ivoire's war, it has hardly established a lasting peace. Instead, a political stalemate between the rebels and the government has left French troops in the undesirable position of enforcing a de facto partition with no clear exit strategy. "Today, we are really in a situation where we don't know the rescue gate," admits Francis Guenon, France's political attaché in Côte d'Ivoire. Viewed in this light, France's experience here reads more as a cautionary tale for Western states considering intervention in future civil wars than a model for how to do it right.

To a large degree, France's diplomatic efforts have become a victim of its own battlefield success. Because Licorne so effectively ended the fighting, neither the rebels nor the government believe they have fully exhausted their military options, making political compromise more difficult. Instead, both sides accuse the country's former colonial master of colluding with the enemy and robbing them of victory.

Belief in a French "stab in the back" is particularly strong in the south, where Gbagbo has fomented anti-French sentiments. Politicians accuse France of failing to live up to its commitments under a 1961 defense treaty, which obligated France to aid Côte d'Ivoire against external aggression. Loyalists argue that, because the rebels were sheltered by Burkina Faso prior to their initial attacks, they represent an external force. (France says the rebellion was an internal affair.) Mamadou Koulibaly, a member of Gbagbo's party, published a book this summer accusing France of backing the rebellion to protect its privileged economic position in Côte d'Ivoire, a position Gbagbo allegedly threatened by promising to allow bidding for several large contracts held by French companies (France denies this). Last month, amid this anti-French fervor, a French radio reporter named Jean Helene was shot to death by an Ivorian police officer. Worst of all, Gbagbo hard-liners view the Marcoussis peace plan—named for the Parisian suburb where negotiations took place in January—as imposed by France rather than as an Ivorian solution to the current crisis. This belief may sow the seeds of future political unrest.

Resentment of France is more tempered in the rebel-held north, but there is still a conviction that Licorne saved Gbagbo's government. "If France had not interposed its forces and asked us to negotiate, I am sure we would be in Abidjan today," says Colonel Soumaïla Bakayoko, the rebels' military commander. Bakayoko's assessment is probably correct. Because Côte d'Ivoire has relied on France for its external defense since independence, it never invested heavily in its military. The national army remained relatively weak and, in the early days of the rebellion, was in disarray. Without Licorne, the rebels might have achieved a relatively quick and decisive victory—at a terrible cost in civilian lives. But the French intervention has prolonged the conflict, risking further violence and deaths in the future. "Even some members of the French community here say it would have been better if we hadn't come," says French diplomat Guenon. "They say in two to three days the situation could have been stabilized by the rebellion."

The problem for France now is that it can't extricate itself from its expensive entanglement—Licorne costs roughly $30 million per month—until at least 2005, when the Marcoussis peace plan calls for national elections. But that timetable is looking increasingly unrealistic. The French-policed "zone of confidence" separating the combatants was meant to smooth the peace process. But, by removing the threat of renewed fighting, it has given both sides the confidence to throw up political roadblocks. Gbagbo has been slow to turn over more power to a prime minister. Angered by Gbagbo's foot-dragging, the rebels withdrew from the power-sharing government in late September.

Even if the current impasse is overcome, however, more hurdles remain. The process established by Marcoussis calls for controversial changes to citizenship laws prior to elections—changes that make it easier to obtain Ivorian citizenship, even if only one parent was born in Côte d'Ivoire.

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It also outlines a plan to disarm the rebels and reintegrate them into a new national army. Each of these steps is fraught with difficulty. And, given the country's recent history, which includes a 1999 coup and the disenfranchisement of massive numbers of voters during the 2000 election, there is no guarantee that all parties would abide by the results of eventual elections. "Marcoussis is a way to a peace, but it may not be a sustainable peace," says Richard Yao, an Ivorian sociologist.

In recent weeks, the French have begun considering surrendering peacekeeping operations to a U.N. force. And, while the U.S. foreign policy establishment has seen France's intervention here as the example for Liberia, the view from Abidjan is exactly the opposite. Here, some say, it would have been better if France had followed America's lead, labeling Gbagbo an impediment to peace, just as the United States singled out Charles Taylor and pressured him to step down. Then it could have helped a West African peacekeeping force deploy here. Alternatively, France could have intervened to help one side win a decisive victory. As one Licorne officer told me, "In hindsight, it might have been better if we had a clear mandate to tip the scales." Barring that, perhaps France should have considered staying out of its former colony altogether. ■

Erin Brockovich's weird science.

Toxic

BY ERIC UMANSKY

Erin Brockovich-Ellis claims that chemical leaks are giving kids in Beverly Hills cancer, but the evidence suggests she's wrong.

"THIS IS NOT a publicity stunt," Erin Brockovich-Ellis informs the crowd gathered at the exclusive Beverly Hills Hotel. "This is not about making another movie." It's March, and the famous environmental crusader is speaking before hundreds of Beverly Hills High School parents and alumni crammed into the hotel's Crystal Ballroom. It's a strange confluence of Hollywood story lines: The heroine of the 2000 film *Erin Brockovich*—whom Julia Roberts won an Oscar portraying—is here to warn that current and former students at the school on which "Beverly Hills 90210" was based are being poisoned by toxic emissions from nearby oil wells.

As just about anybody who has set foot in a multiplex knows, in the mid-'90s Brockovich and her boss, lawyer Ed Masry, helped uncover groundwater contamination in the central California town of Hinkley and as a result won a massive settlement from Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E). (As the film's promo line put it, "She brought a small town to its feet and a huge company to its knees.") In the decade since the Hinkley case, Masry and Brockovich-Ellis (she changed her name after remarrying four years ago) have led several more class-action suits against alleged corporate polluters, with mixed results. Tonight, their crusade has brought them to Beverly Hills.

Dressed in a dark business suit with a low-cut white top underneath, Brockovich-Ellis explains that she was approached a few months earlier at one of her book signings by a young woman, Lori Moss, who had been diagnosed with Hodgkin's disease and thyroid cancer. Brockovich-Ellis's interest was piqued: After all, Moss was only 28 years old and said she had already had two types of cancer. Where did you grow up? Brockovich-Ellis asked. Beverly Hills, said Moss. Were there industrial sites around? Moss explained that oil wells abutted the campus of her high school, known colloquially as "Beverly."

So Brockovich-Ellis came to Beverly to test the air. And what she found was shocking. "I was just sitting in the bleachers," she tells the gathered parents, "and we got benzene readings that were at very alarming levels—at least five times higher than on the 405 [Freeway]." (Benzene, a natural component of crude oil, is a human carcinogen and is commonly found at low levels in urban areas because it is an automobile emission.) And it's not only the wells still operating next to Beverly that pose a threat, she explains: The school's football field sits "right over abandoned wells" that were never properly capped. "And now they're leaking,"

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VINCE BUCCI/NEWSCOM *(Photo-illustration by TNR)*

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Brockovich-Ellis reports. "I would not want my children playing on that field. It's very heavily contaminated."

As many in the crowd gasp, Brockovich-Ellis describes the results of this toxic exposure: More than 150 students and alumni have contracted cancer (a number that will jump to 300 soon after the meeting). Hodgkin's disease—which Brockovich-Ellis says is associated with benzene—is occurring at 16 times normal levels, thyroid cancer at 14 times normal levels. The average age of a Beverly student or alumnus diagnosed with cancer is just 33. Dr. James Dahlgren, a medical consultant working with Brockovich-Ellis, briefly takes the podium and cautions, "These all could be an aberration," before adding, "but you have a whole cluster of rare and unusual cancers. That's why it's probably more than a statistical blip."

Then Masry, Brockovich-Ellis's boss and partner-in-activism (played by Albert Finney in the movie), steps up to the podium and drops another bombshell: Not only are the wells causing cancer, the city has known about the risks all along. Working through a PowerPoint presentation, Masry, a small man in his early seventies looking somewhat disheveled in a suit a size too big, pulls up a copy of a document known as an environmental checklist form. Previous owners of the wells submitted the form in 1984, when their lease to operate the rigs was up for renewal. Masry reads aloud one of the questions, "Will the proposal result in the creation of any health hazard or potential health hazard?" The question offered three possible boxes to check: Yes, No, or Maybe. The check was on Maybe. "Maybe?" Masry bellows. "These guys suspected there might be a problem. And yet they *never* did any testing." As Beverly parents turn to one another in disbelief, Masry reads aloud from another city document: "The [oil-well] project will result in substantial economic benefits by the school district and city." The school district and city, Masry explains, are making hundreds of thousands of dollars annually from the wells.

One middle-aged father stands up and tries to challenge Masry. "Mister Masry," he begins, "I have spoken with [local health officials], and they say you have not shared your data." Amid murmurs from the crowd, Masry shouts, "Shut up! Quiet! I have made appointments to do split samples. I can't dance anymore than I already am." The parents cheer. Then another father speaks, his voice rising above the crowd. "I will take it upon myself to shut those wells down!" he shouts, amid chants of "Shut the pumps! Shut the pumps!"

Masry and Brockovich-Ellis's claims are very dramatic. In all likelihood, they are also wrong. A few months after the presentation at the Beverly Hills Hotel, Brockovich-Ellis will explain to *People* and *The Economist*, "I have 300 cancers staring me in the face and an oil-production facility underneath the school. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out that the two fit together." It may not require a rocket scientist, but it certainly requires some compelling scientific evidence. And the preponderance of evidence suggests that the Beverly oil wells are not having any discernable impact on the health of Beverly students. Nor is Beverly an isolated case. Many of Brockovich-Ellis and Masry's other toxic-contamination lawsuits have been supported by questionable scientific evidence at best, dating all the way back to the case that made them famous.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ISN'T just a mecca for automobiles; it's also full of oil. The first deposits were discovered and tapped at the turn of the twentieth century. Since then, more than 50 oil fields have been found and more than one billon barrels of oil extracted. Few towns have benefited from the boom more—or probably needed it less—than Beverly Hills. In the early 1900s, prospectors discovered that the wealthy enclave lay directly above a giant deposit, estimated at more than 100 million barrels. On the grounds of what is now Beverly, the first wells were drilled in 1906, predating the school by 20 years. The wells on the site operated on and off for years. Some, including those under what is now the school's football field, were abandoned and capped. In the early '80s, with production declining, the owners drilled 17 new wells, which continue to pump today.

The March meeting at the Beverly Hills Hotel wasn't the first time Beverly parents heard that the long-standing wells might be harming their kids. A month earlier, L.A.'s CBS affiliate, KCBS, broke the story during sweeps week. The report—headlined "TOXIC SCHOOL?"—relied heavily on Masry and Brockovich-Ellis's allegations. "If your child goes to Beverly Hills High School, you should pay specific attention to this story," it began, "because there is growing evidence that going to school, sitting in classrooms, and especially exercising on the play fields could have your child breathing toxic fumes." (The producer of the segment, Claudia Bill-de la Pena, serves on the city council of Thousand Oaks along with Masry. And, as was first reported in *The Beverly Hills Courier*—the town's free weekly, which has distinguished itself with aggressive reporting on the case—Masry and his wife have both donated money to Bill-de la Pena's bids for office.)

In the weeks following the KCBS report and the March meeting, Beverly Hills was in near pandemonium. Just a month after the meeting, Masry filed 216 claims with the city, each one from a student or alumnus who alleged the wells had poisoned them. In addition to Masry's claims against the city, he filed suit in June against the wells' owner, a regional oil company named Venoco; two other oil companies that were connected to the wells by subsidiaries; and Sempra Energy, which owns an office-building heating-and-cooling unit on the same block. (Masry has not publicized specific allegations against Sempra.) By early November, the number of claims would swell to 664, mostly from alumni, including 370 claiming cancer and 182 claimants demanding medical monitoring and punitive damages based on "fear" or "risk" of "developing cancer." The other claims run the gamut, from "ear-ringing" and "frequent tingling sensation," to "urinary problems," "headaches," and "insomnia."

As Masry and Brockovich-Ellis spent the spring and sum-

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mer signing up clients—and some parents threatened a school boycott, which never materialized—a host of city and state agencies began conducting environmental tests at Beverly. At first, in February, they seemed to find something: The wells had occasionally been venting natural gas into the air. For years, the local gas company had bought natural gas from the wells, and, when the gas company decided to implement stricter enforcement of its BTU rating for natural gas during the summer of last year, the company found that gas from the wells at Beverly did not meet the new requirements and stopped buying the gas. Since Venoco couldn't pump oil without also releasing natural gas, it simply vented the gas, which can contain traces of benzene and other contaminants. Venoco says it believed it had approval to vent—and at least one state official involved in the Beverly case agreed. Regulators also found that a device meant to control the purity of the natural gas coming from the wells, called an amine unit, had improperly functioning filters and had been modified without a proper permit. As a result of the improper filters, the amine unit discharged a small amount of benzene. Though the findings caused concern, neither issue seemed to increase health risk. While natural gas can contain small amounts of contaminants, "it isn't particularly harmful," says Sam Atwood, a spokesman for Southern California's Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD), the region's air-quality agency. "It's basically methane"—the same stuff human beings emit when they break wind. As for the amine unit, the amount of benzene it gave off turned out to be so minute as to be undetectable in the air around Beverly. And, once the filters were replaced weeks after the test, the unit emitted no benzene. Whatever the case, regulators asked Venoco to shut the wells down, which it did in February. (Despite a petition signed by about 2,000 parents, the wells opened again in late October, after Venoco agreed to install continuous air-monitoring equipment and paid a $10,000 settlement that admitted no wrongdoing.)

While the SCAQMD dealt with the apparent violation, health officials looked more closely at Masry and Brockovich-Ellis's specific allegations: Regulators tested the air for benzene and other pollutants while the wells were venting gas, toxicologists took ground samples, epidemiologists looked at cancer rates, and state inspectors examined both the active and the abandoned wells at Beverly.

Everything came up clean. The air wasn't particularly polluted (at least by L.A. standards). Cancer rates in the neighborhood were along the same lines as other white, wealthy neighborhoods in Los Angeles. The ground wasn't contaminated with toxins. The old wells weren't leaking, and the new ones were well-maintained.

Beginning in February and continuing throughout the spring, the SCAQMD, considered the country's toughest anti-pollution agency, tested the air around Beverly six times—at multiple spots during each test. The average reading for benzene—the only chemical alleged to be leaking from the wells that is classified as a human carcinogen—was about one part per billion, typical for Southern California. (State regulators define the limit at which no significant health effects can be expected over a lifetime of constant exposure to benzene at 20 parts per billion.) The SCAQMD sent a letter to parents in April stating that the agency had found "no readings of benzene, hexane, and air toxic levels that are considered abnormal." Consultants hired by the school district also tested the air and came up with similar results. (An environmental consultant hired by a parent said the SCAQMD and city-sponsored reports didn't conclusively find that there were no health risks. And, as part of its agreement to reopen, Venoco agreed to make an overall assessment of the health risks.)

Masry argued to me that the SCAQMD efforts were "grossly negligent." The tests, he claims, were only conducted for a few minutes and only when the wells were turned off. "They weren't worried about injury to kids or to schoolteachers; they were just worried about getting the money." It's true that the SCAQMD, a regional government agency, receives a few hundred to a few thousand dollars per year from the wells for standard permit fees. But, contrary to Masry's other assertions, as the SCAQMD explained in a detailed letter to parents, it tested the air for eight-hour increments and did so while the wells were operating.

While the SCAQMD has been open with its data and testing methodology, Masry and Brockovich-Ellis have not. When city officials repeatedly asked Masry to share his overall test results, Masry repeatedly refused. In the first week of June, the Beverly Hills City Council forced the issue, serving Masry a legislative subpoena (the municipal equivalent of a congressional subpoena). The subpoena required Masry to turn in his data three weeks later. Masry balked and continued withholding his test results, saying that they were part of attorney work product—that is, analyses a lawyer might use to build his case. Judge Valerie Baker, of the Los Angeles Superior Court, didn't buy Masry's argument and on July 16 ordered Masry to produce the data or face fines. Finally, on July 22, nearly two months after the initial subpoena, Masry gave his test findings to Beverly Hills.

Nearly all of Masry's data showed normal levels of benzene. The highest benzene readings in Masry's tests are from an instantaneous "grab sample" showing benzene at 18 parts per billion—still two parts per billion less than the state's threshold. Masry's data states that another test conducted simultaneously that sampled the air for eight hours shows no measurable amount of benzene. The head of research at the lab Masry used to compile his data told the *Courier*, "When you're doing sampling, you don't want to base health-risk decisions on a single sample result; that would be irresponsible."

THE FAILURE TO demonstrate elevated levels of benzene in the air isn't the only weakness in Masry and Brockovich-Ellis's case. It also appears unlikely that benzene causes the types of cancer that they allege are rampant at Beverly. "At high dosages, benzene can cause certain kinds of leukemia," says

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Dr. Thomas Mack, chief of the epidemiology division at the University of Southern California's medical school. "But there is no significant evidence it causes Hodgkin's disease or non-Hodgkin's lymphoma." (Masry says he has experts and studies that document a link between benzene and those cancers. But, when I asked to speak to the experts or for citations to the studies, he said, "Why would I do that? We'll wait until we depose experts and see who is right and who is wrong.")

It's not even clear that there are increased rates of Hodgkin's disease or non-Hodgkin's lymphoma around Beverly. In April, Masry told the Associated Press that the school's cancer rate is 20 to 30 times the national average. "I've never seen cancers this high," Masry told me. "I've never even heard of them this high." At a preliminary hearing for the case in July, a Beverly Hills city attorney asked Masry's firm, Masry & Vititoe, to produce evidence backing up their publicly stated numbers. A lawyer for the firm, Rick Ottaiano, asserted that he didn't have to hand over the information, again invoking attorney work product. But Judge Baker rejected that argument, and Ottaiano acknowledged that his firm had no data on the rate of cancer at Beverly, stating, "There has been no commissioned epidemiological study or population study."

Ottaiano seems misinformed. While Masry & Vititoe apparently did not conduct any scientific study of cancer rates around Beverly, the cancer registry program at the University of Southern California did. The program (which epidemiology chief Mack participates in) tracks all cancers in L.A. County and looks for trends, breaking down cases by race, age, gender, socioeconomic status, neighborhood, etc. After the KCBS report, the registry looked at the number of cancers in the neighborhood surrounding Beverly. In the spring, it released its report, stating, "The observed numbers of Hodgkin's lymphoma [aka Hodgkin's disease], non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, and thyroid cancer among white residents were within the expected range." (The researchers explained that they couldn't calculate cancers among non-whites in that part of Beverly Hills because "there were too few cases.")

It's true that the study did not calculate the rate of cancer at the high school itself. Mack explains that, while cancer rates broken down by census tracts are readily available, calculating the rate of various cancers among alumni would be a far more involved, expensive undertaking. "You'd first need to decide what your denominator is," says Mack. "Everybody who attended Beverly for at least a month, for at least a year? How about summer school? And then you need to track down the people and then their medical files." In Mack's estimation, there's no reason to do any of that. Since the benzene around Beverly is at normal levels, he says, "there's simply no evidence that it is a cause of concern."

As for what may seem to a layman like a large number of Hodgkin's and other cancers among Beverly students and young alumni, Mack says the numbers aren't atypical. Hodgkin's disease and non-Hodgkin's lymphoma often afflict young adults and, for reasons that aren't clear, are more prevalent in wealthy areas. (The leading theory is that children with many siblings have a better chance of early exposure to certain viruses that make them more resistant to lymphomas—and wealthier parents tend to have fewer children.)

Epidemiologists, including Mack, acknowledge that they can't say definitely that something in the air isn't causing a rise in cancer rates. If benzene from Beverly's wells had caused two or three cases of cancer—resulting in the rate of cancer in the neighborhood increasing only slightly—epidemiologists probably wouldn't notice it, since the neighborhood's overall cancer rate might still be within the range considered normal. (Epidemiologists typically don't think anything less than one-and-a-half times the expected rate is significant.)

Still, Mack says there's no reason for concern about Beverly students. "We're always dealing with levels of probability; we can't avoid that," he says. "But taking a neighborhood that has a few cancers and then trying to figure out where they came from usually isn't helpful. Instead, you look at the known risks. In this case, is there any evidence that benzene at the levels found by Beverly causes cancer? No. You're just as likely to get cancer from your car stereo."

Finally, there is the supposed smoking gun that Masry waved about at the Beverly Hills Hotel: the environmental checklist in which the wells' owner at the time, the Beverly Hills Oil Company, had checked a box saying "Maybe" the wells would cause adverse health effects. What Masry and Brockovich-Ellis didn't mention was that the checklist was only a follow-up form. The original environmental-impact report, prepared by an environmental consulting firm for Beverly Hills, detailed the wells' potential effects on the air and how to mitigate them. It concluded that the wells, which like other wells in urban areas would be electrically powered to avoid polluting, would "emit minimal pollution." The only area that merited concern—and thus the "Maybe" on the check form—was diesel fumes from construction trucks at the site.

Masry's contention that the wells were never tested for problems is also misleading. The SCAQMD requires Venoco to test the wells for leaks on a quarterly basis and promptly report any problems or face fines and closure. Before this year, Venoco's Beverly Hills site had never been cited for a violation. Indeed, Venoco had won an award from state regulators for running a particularly clean operation.

The lack of evidence that the Beverly wells pose a health risk doesn't surprise Dr. Cyrus Rangan, director of toxics epidemiology at L.A. County's Department of Health Services. "There are lots of oil wells around Los Angeles," he says. "And there's no evidence that there's elevated cancer rates around any of them. Why this one?" He adds, "I look at three big things in my job. Is there an occurrence of disease out of proportion to what we would expect? What is something that might cause that? And is there a connection

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between the two? Masry and Brockovich's assertions don't satisfy any of those conditions."

IF THERE'S NO compelling evidence that benzene levels at Beverly are dangerously high, nor that cancer rates among current and former students are elevated, nor that the former would cause the latter even if both were true, then why are hundreds of Beverly parents and alumni suing?

In part, it's because of Brockovich-Ellis's reputation: People have seen the movie, and they trust her. And much of the movie is accurate. Brockovich-Ellis successfully demanded a job from Masry after he failed to win her a settlement in a car-crash claim. In 1992, Masry was hired by a resident of Hinkley after the local power company, PG&E, acknowledged contaminating some of the town's groundwater with chromium-6, a human carcinogen. As Brockovich-Ellis worked on the case for Masry, she began, in her estimation, to find evidence that PG&E's contamination of the groundwater was causing people in town to get sick. Brockovich-Ellis collected clients, and Masry sued. The case went to mediation, and, in 1996, PG&E settled for $333 million, one of the biggest environmental settlements ever made. "We screwed up," said a PG&E spokesman at the time.

But there are elements of the story that are still subject to dispute. For instance, Brockovich-Ellis alleged that the local water board had tried to keep files about the contamination undercover, a point that the movie emphasizes. Hisam Baqai, supervising engineer for the local water board, insists it isn't true. "I don't know how she came up with secret stuff from the files," he says. "All our files were public."

There's also a somewhat larger point the movie mischaracterizes: Although there was contamination in Hinkley, there's virtually no evidence that it made residents sick. Various studies have found that chromium-6 is only carcinogenic when inhaled, not when ingested, as Hinkley residents would have done when they drank the contaminated water. As a 1998 Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) report put it, "No data were located in the available literature that suggested that chromium-6 is carcinogenic by the oral route." (The reason, say researchers, is that stomach acid turns the toxins into chromium-3, a harmless substance that can be found in food.) Moreover, a joint federal-state study conducted in 2000 concluded that, while some chromium-6 did indeed make it into some residents' wells, it affected a small number of houses, about 15. (The study's authors note that their findings aren't conclusive since they didn't test until years after the contamination began and that, theoretically, there may have been significant airborne contamination years earlier.) "It was very localized," says Dr. John Morgan, the epidemiologist who oversees the registry charged with tracking cancers in Hinkley. "And the concentration of chromium-6 in the most contaminated wells was in the order of one-quarter-millionth to one-five-millionth the level that was linked with nasopharyngeal carcinoma," the only type of cancer that he says has been linked to the chemical. "Jumping to cancer from that is a quantum leap in logic."

There is also no evidence that there even was a cancer cluster in Hinkley. In 1995, Morgan looked for exactly that and didn't find it. His ensuing report described the "absence of a cancer excess" and concluded "that the number of new cancer cases observed in the census tract encompassing Hinkley does not differ significantly from the number expected." According to Morgan, neither Brockovich-Ellis nor Masry ever asked the registry to look for a cluster. "It's bizarre," he says, "to claim a cancer excess and then never ask to investigate a cancer excess. Of course, it's only bizarre if you're trying to get to the truth. If you're trying to win a lawsuit, then perhaps better to say there may be an increase than to know there's not."

SINCE HINKLEY, MASRY and Brockovich-Ellis have pushed similar claims elsewhere, with what appears to be diminishing success. Their most notable victory took place in the Northern California town of Crockett. In summer 1994, Crockett residents were exposed to a potentially toxic cloud for about two weeks, the result of a leak from a nearby Unocal refinery. The leak—of a chemical cocktail called Catacarb—went on for so long because the oil company delayed notifying officials while the refinery kept operating. By the time Unocal copped to the leak, so much Catacarb was around Crockett that the company had to send crews around town washing off cars and windows. Unocal eventually agreed to pay $3 million in criminal and civil fines and, in April 1997, settled a class-action suit, in which Masry & Vititoe was one of many firms suing, reportedly for $80 million.

Masry and Brockovich-Ellis were less successful in a lawsuit on behalf of residents of Avila Beach, a town along California's central coast, near San Luis Obispo. There has been an oil-storage facility near the town since the early 1900s, and, in the late '80s, authorities found that pipes running below Avila—also owned by Unocal—had leaked. Health officials didn't find evidence that the spill had come to the surface, but in late 1996 residents nonetheless banded together and, represented by—among others—a self-described small-town lawyer named Jim Duenow, sued Unocal. As Duenow prepared his case, Brockovich-Ellis came to town. Duenow remembers her as being persuasive. "She is a fine-looking lady," he says. "I would have signed anything she handed me." Brockovich-Ellis soon began signing up clients of her own and testing the beach. Before long, she announced that the spill had come to the surface and that it was making people sick. A report early the next year from Masry's law firm, as reported in the *San Luis Obispo New Times*, concluded, "Adults and children who frequent the beach engaging in typical beach activities, such as playing in the sand, burying themselves in the sand and sunning themselves would appear to be at great risk."

Duenow, whose case depended primarily on the effect

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the leaks had on homeowners' property values, says he also researched the possibility that they might cause health problems. "It just wasn't there," he says now. "None of our clients had health damages related to the contamination. ... There just weren't maintainable health claims."

As in Beverly Hills, county and independent toxicologists weren't able to replicate Brockovich-Ellis's findings. "We sampled air, sand, groundwater," says Alvin Greenberg, a toxicologist who oversaw a report for the county investigating the claims. "We never found evidence that subsurface contamination had come up." And, as in Beverly Hills, Masry and Brockovich-Ellis avoided sharing their data. "She accused me at a community meeting of not properly reviewing her data," recalls Greenberg. "I apologized and said I would examine it if she sent it to me. I never heard from her again."

Asked today about the disparity between the county's findings and his own allegations, Masry charges, "The county was concerned about getting sued so they didn't find toxins. ... We find that all the time with governmental agencies. They're just trying to cover their ass." (Brockovich-Ellis declined repeated requests for comment.)

With their health claims falling apart, Masry retreated and reportedly settled with Unocal in 1999 for a relatively small sum for their roughly 60 clients: $3 million. The modest settlement angered residents who had been led to believe that Unocal had poisoned them. Masry and Brockovich-Ellis "came in and dramatized what was going on and got everyone hooked," one former client told the *SLO New Times*. "Nobody was happy with these lawyers, nobody."

Another environmental-contamination claim Masry's firm was involved in between Hinkley and Beverly never even made it to the lawsuit stage. In early 1998, the firm charged that Fontana, an industrial town about 60 miles east of Los Angeles, was contaminated with mercury. Fontana borders an acid pit created in the 1950s by companies that dumped millions of gallons of waste—it has long been an EPA Superfund site. Masry's experts, after hearing media reports about a parent in town who thought that toxins might have been responsible for the death of her daughter, showed up and said they suspected mercury had leaked from the pit and spread into town. The result, one resident told the local paper, was "pandemonium and panic."

"People started putting their houses up for sale," recalls Fontana Mayor Mark Nuaimi, who at the time was on the city council. Nuaimi and other city officials asked Masry to share his findings, so that, if there was a problem, they could address it. Masry, again, resisted. "They came up with excuses when we asked for their evidence," says Nuaimi. "When we asked to be escorted to a site, they refused to go there."

When city health officials, accompanied by residents, took samples, they found no trace of mercury. Masry "made allegations that were never substantiated and accused agencies of cover-up," says Nuaimi, who notes that Masry eventually left without filing suit. "They feed off the hysteria and fear of the people, at least that's what we found in our situation. It really is a story of crying wolf." (Masry says he doesn't recall his firm's involvement in Fontana.)

THE BEVERLY HILLS case is still in the beginning stages, with lawyers just beginning to joust. Depositions haven't even been taken yet, and it will likely be another year or two before the case makes it to trial. But it may not come to that. According to legal scholars, 98 percent of tort cases get settled. And, while it's certainly helpful to have the facts on your side, you can get a large settlement without them. "There can be all sorts of reasons for settling: Insurance issues, p.r. issues, et cetera," says Margaret Berger, a professor at Brooklyn Law School. "Dying children do not make a popular picture."

Indeed, the Beverly case has already taken a toll on the defendants: In August, a Texas oil company, Holly Corporation, effectively pulled out of its $450 million deal to merge with Frontier Oil, one of the companies named in the Beverly suit. Citing the lawsuit as the reason, the company tried to change the terms of the deal, demanding all cash instead of Frontier stock. Frontier refused and has sued for breach of contract.

If the case has already proved a loser for the oil companies involved, it has already proved a p.r. windfall for Masry and Brockovich-Ellis. And why not? It's the perfect combination of stories: kids with cancer, "Beverly Hills 90210," and a real-life, Hollywood-endorsed hero. Sure enough, the suit has been covered by media from New Zealand to Sweden, including CNN, "Good Morning America," and "Today." Most of the coverage, unsurprisingly, is deferential toward Masry and Brockovich-Ellis.

Such attention is particularly helpful to Brockovich-Ellis, who is currently trying to cement her status as a celebrity folk hero. Since January, she has been hosting a new TV show on the Lifetime Channel entitled "Final Justice." (It's described on the program's website as "True stories of ordinary women who fought back against the system and won. ... Hosted by the underdog heroine herself.") Brockovich-Ellis can also be found on the back of Organic Valley milk cartons as a spokesperson for the environmental group Children's Health Environmental Coalition, which offers an "Erin Brockovich Action Kit" encouraging people to join the coalition and support its mission "to protect children from toxic substances." And she has been trying her hand at acting, performing in a recent Los Angeles–area production of "The Vagina Monologues."

There is even a chance that *Erin Brockovich II* may be coming to the box office. Brockovich-Ellis, of course, told the reporters assembled at the Beverly Hills Hotel, "This is not about making another movie." But, in September, "Celebrity Justice," an "Entertainment Tonight"–esque, publicity-driven show, reported, "Well-placed sources tell 'C.J.' the sequel is a go, ... with Masry, Brockovich, and director Steven Soderbergh on board to parlay this latest adventure into *Erin Brockovich Two*." Brockovich-Ellis declined to comment. ■

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BOOKS & THE ARTS

STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

The Same, Only Different

ONE COMFORT IN CONTEMporary culture is Philip Roth's reputation. It is gratifying to see, amid modern critical vagaries, that Roth's dazzling talent is prized as it deserves to be. We can hardly be puzzled that little of this extraordinary author's work has been filmed. Roth's books, especially in the last twenty years or so, have been firestorms of vitality, replete with characters whose stories, dramas, adventures, spring from their lives rather than from obedience to plot. Many a splendid novel has been well adapted for the screen, but such novels hadn't often seemed to exist originally within a circle of magic-fire protective prose. Roth is more dangerous. When we read most Roth novels, we can almost hear a constant buried sizzle: "Adapt me if you can."

THE HUMAN STAIN
(Miramax)

Until **THE HUMAN STAIN.** Nicholas Meyer, who wrote the seductive *Seven-Per-Cent Solution*, among others, has tackled it. Meyer's screenplay has been called unsuccessful, and I agree; but, without glossing some bumps that are his doing, I'd say that in this case the trouble with the screen adaptation is the novel. This is the only Roth work I know that does not seem to flow and grow from its characters: it seems built from a blueprint to which both action and character must conform. *The Human Stain* is a thesis novel, a rarity with Roth. He addresses a specific modern problem, which is different from addressing, as he usually does, the moral climate that is the source of *all* our problems. The heat of his electrifyingly lyrical prose never dims, but he has contrived characters instead of discovering them; and he has wound their lives around a social issue instead of treating the whole world as a jungle replete with issues, social and moral, through which his people struggle. Thus *The Human Stain*, for all its page-by-page rewards, is a smaller book internally than most of Roth's work. It is no compliment to the art of film to say that the book's quasi-mechanical structure, plus that social issue, recommended it for adaptation, but I'd guess that this was what happened. These facts also explain why the film's shortcomings are not all Meyer's: most of them are in the novel.

In 1998 Coleman Silk is the late-middle-aged dean of faculty and professor of classics at a venerable New England college. One day in a class he uses the word "spooks" in its original sense but in a context where it could be misinterpreted as a slur against black people. A storm erupts in the college, which angers the innocent Silk to the point that eventually he resigns. Such lunatic political-correctness quarrels have certainly occurred in the academy, but Roth has made a miscalculation here. The fact that this sort of thing has happened does not in itself qualify it as the basis of a long, diverse novel.

Further, Roth then has Silk's wife die of a heart attack in the fuss that follows, an obvious device to clear the decks for Silk's subsequent involvement with another woman. That woman, Faunia Farley, is the polar opposite of Silk in intellect and background—a divorcée in her thirties who is a college janitor and also runs a dairy farm. (As a dairy-farm veteran, I had to doubt the possibility of someone doing both jobs.) These two characters, Faunia and Silk, seem back-formations in the author's mind. It is as if he had outlined the story, then invented characters to perform it—the reverse of the usual Roth procedure, as far as a reader can tell.

Sometimes the actors in a film can compensate for the author's lapses, but here the film-makers add their faults to Roth's. The casting weakens the film, and in a particularly painful way. A magnificent actor, Anthony Hopkins, plays Silk. His British accent is justified lamely by saying that this American began his teaching career in England. Worse, Hopkins spends all his time searching for verity in the character, for some grip on a man who could be more than a construct for a plot. We never glimpse a whole Silk, just a collection of qualities that surface when needed. He confides in a friend that Viagra is making his affair with Faunia possible: Hopkins could have used some potion from Roth's character to make his performance possible. Nicole Kidman as Faunia has a similar character problem. The woman is an assemblage of elements—a ragged life in many ways, including a bad marriage, a ghastly accident with her children, a divorce from an unbalanced man. Faunia seems a collection of items in a social worker's dossier that Roth hands to her, not a woman who lies within Kidman's (usually impressive) grasp.

This love affair is the locus from which the film moves forward and backward in time. The present action largely involves Les Farley, Faunia's ex-husband, played with almost palpable madness by Ed Harris. Farley is a Vietnam veteran who is still fiercely jealous of Faunia, so mentally unbalanced that he can take violent steps about her and Silk. This story is played out against newscasts of the Clinton-Lewinsky affair, which background is one of the most sardonic Rothian touches in the piece.

The flashbacks present a lengthy youthful love affair of Silk's that has little to do with the core of the later book. But principally the flashbacks reveal a secret that must be widely known by now. Silk is himself black, although he doesn't look it. This datum not only thickens the plot, it alters the issue. What has seemed an instance of p.c. obtuseness, a general problem, now becomes the more specialized case of a (secretly) black man accused of racism against blacks. This is not a social issue but a psychological one, and it changes Silk from a man with whom we can feel sympathy into a sick person who needs help.

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But Roth contrives something even more heavy: Silk is Jewish. Talk about piling Pelion on Ossa! It's even worse: actually, he is known as a Jew, but he isn't really Jewish. As a young man, he decided to call himself a Jew. (His mother, a nurse, had her infant boy circumcised for hygienic reasons.) Roth's treatment of Silk's assumption of Jewishness is perfunctory, inadequately clarifying that the man who will suppress one invisible social onus, his race, will compensate with another onus, even if it is false. In the film Meyer scants the matter even further, possibly guided by Roth. The viewer is never clear as to why Silk, son of a black Gentile family, wants to be known as a Jew.

The last major character is the novelist Nathan Zuckerman, Roth's presumed alter ego who is the protagonist of several of his novels. Here Zuckerman is only an observer. Stymied in his writing, he has retreated to a cabin in the woods near the college, and he becomes Silk's friend. Troublesome though that proves to be, it is eventually lucky for Zuckerman. The ex post facto writing of Silk's story breaks Zuckerman's writer's block. Gary Sinise plays the writer, and once again a splendid actor in this picture does not fulfill his role. But this time it is not because of Roth. It is Meyer who does not give us enough of Zuckerman. It is hard to imagine this Zuckerman thinking, as Roth's does, when he puts on a phonograph record in his silent cabin: "The music that I play after dinner is not a relief from the silence but something like its substantiation: listening to music for an hour or two every evening doesn't deprive me of the silence—the music is the silence coming true." (Those lines, and many more like them, prove that Roth has certainly not lost his poetic surge.)

Still, the best sequence in the film, which is also the best section of the novel, is an encounter between Zuckerman and Les Farley. The story has bumped along, without cumulation or thematic resolve, to a grim conclusion. In a last sequence, Farley, who was involved in that conclusion, is ice fishing out in the middle of the white expanse of a frozen lake. Unlike the others in the cast, Ed Harris has been able to give us his character complete, because this unstrung vet is a more easily encompassable figure, and Harris is wonderfully able to encompass him.

All the turbulent events of the film have finished: after the din comes the quiet of the frozen lake. Zuckerman, embarked on his novel, trudges out there to speak to him. Farley, now calm, thoughtful, talks about the life under the ice down in the dark. Zuckerman listens, perhaps already perceiving some symbolism in this account. He tells Farley that he is writing a novel called *The Human Stain* and promises, as he leaves, to send him a copy when it is finished.

Robert Benton, who directed and whose most recent film of note was *Nobody's Fool*, has had a career more marked by sincerity than virtuosity. But this last ice-fishing sequence combines that sincerity with a virtuosic touch of abstraction, an almost floating coda for the film, as chilled as the purportedly chilling story it has told. ■

JED PERL ON ART

Old Modern Spain

EL GRECO
(Metropolitan Museum of Art)

GOYA
By Robert Hughes
(Alfred A. Knopf)

SPAIN, THAT FIERCE AND INDOLENT country, is stamped on the modern imagination. It was in the early nineteenth century that creative spirits began to regard the Iberian peninsula as a chiaroscuro land, where a dazzling individualism was always struggling against a dusky medievalism. And since then figures as diverse as Delacroix, Daumier, Manet, Picasso, Ravel, Malraux, Buñuel, and Balanchine have found in El Greco's agitated compositions, in Cervantes's hilarious yet saturnine *Don Quixote*, and in Goya's raucous *Caprichos* nothing less than the witching hour of the modern imagination—a time when the birth of the new is cataclysmic, a matter of paradox and paroxysm, of hopelessness as much as hope.

For modern artists and writers, the fascination of Spain has had everything to do with the wrenching conflict between, on the one side, the country's fearsome Catholicism and calcified aristocratic traditions, and, on the other side, Western Europe's seemingly ineluctable embrace of progress. The authoritarianism of Spanish experience pushed the country's greatest artists and writers to dramatize a yearning for modernity. Some of these dramatizations were conscious acts, such as Goya's *Caprichos*; but sometimes what we now experience as an unruly individualism may not have been the artist's design, as in the expressionist disquietude of El Greco's *View of Toledo* and the caught-at-an-angle realism of some of Velázquez's portraits. And yet Ravel was not wrong, in his *Pavane Pour une Infante Défunte*, to believe that Velázquez understood the private longings of the princesses whom he painted. And nobody can doubt that Daumier, one of a long line of artists who took an interest in *Don Quixote*, was justified in seeing the contrasting profiles of Sancho Panza and the Don as an image of the enduring conflict between the flesh and the imagination. By the time this tormented country became the first battleground in Europe's twentieth-century conflict between democratic individualism and fascist reaction, artists and writers could be forgiven for imagining that Spain's greatest creators had been warning for centuries of what was to come. Picasso, when he painted *Guernica*, capitalized on those echoes, re-framing the calamitous aerial bombardment of a Basque town in visual terms that hark back to Goya.

Guernica is now more than sixty years old; Franco's Spain has vanished; and the country whose painful climb into modernity held such a fascination has become a sleek Western European nation, celebrated as much for its flair for the new as for its legendary artistic achievements. Spain's embrace of modernity has become a part of Spanish history, not least the history of its art. While the paintings of El Greco were an electrifying discovery among artists and connoisseurs in France and Germany a hundred years ago, his work, which is the subject of a retrospective at the Metropolitan Museum of Art through January 11, now seems to hold a more secure place among the old masters than that of Raphael, whose

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sturdy academic credentials strike the sophisticated public as somehow suspect. The organizers of the Metropolitan show are eager to remind us that El Greco counted among his staunchest admirers Picasso and Pollock, and yet those men, by now, are themselves figures in history.

Goya, the subject of a brilliant, impassioned new biography by Robert Hughes, is another artist whose achievement seems to grow more imposing with each passing year. While Goya had been an immensely successful painter for decades before his death in 1828, it was only in the deepening perspectives of the twentieth century that he emerged as the man who transformed the joyous abandon of the rococo brush into the rough-hewn truth of a modern painterly attack. Goya exhibitions have been a staple of museumgoing in recent years: there was "Goya: Images of Women" at the National Gallery of Art in Washington in 2002, "Goya: Another Look" in Philadelphia in 1999, and "Goya: Truth and Fantasy, the Small Paintings," in Chicago in 1994. As for Velázquez, the seventeenth-century master in the immortal triumvirate of Spanish art, his work was the subject of a retrospective at the Metropolitan in 1989, and just last spring the museum mounted "Manet/Velázquez: The French Taste for Spanish Painting," an exhibition whose excellent catalogue, by Gary Tinterow and Geneviève Lacambre, is an exploration of the modern love affair with Spain.

It is my impression that critics have been somewhat uneasy about the El Greco exhibition. The postmoderns among them are unsure how to handle an old master whom the moderns loved so much. And Goya may not be immune to similar confusions. The fact that Robert Hughes is largely untroubled by such matters will only strengthen some in the conviction that this critic, who over the years has had harsh things to say about the art world's fashion-forward shenanigans, is an unregenerate, unapologetic modern, albeit one with a canny ear for the streetwise rhythms of these late modern times. Perhaps what we are witnessing in the current fascination with El Greco and Goya is the final stages of some grand process by which the modern understanding of classic Spanish painting becomes part of the essential meaning of the old masters. Neither El Greco nor Goya has anything to do with classicism's reasoned idealization of naturalistic experience. And there is no doubt that for the many contemporary artists who are such ardent admirers of Goya and El Greco, the Spaniards' disaffection with artistic convention has itself become a model for artistic practice.

COURTESY METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

EL GRECO, *The Adoration of the Shepherds*, 1612–1614

In the art of El Greco, there is exaggeration without excess. Picasso, who had made a close study of El Greco's crazily angled forms before embarking on *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon* in 1907, grasped the late Renaissance master's extremism but not his underlying equanimity, and it is the equanimity that is ultimately so miraculous. El Greco's colors—those shivering whites and clangorous yellows and feverish blues—ought to be impossible. His figures—their bodies so wildly elongated, their faces and hands so hopelessly twisted—ought to be grotesque. And yet this arch-expressionist, who pulls his grand designs out of a sense of form that can strike us as quite nearly deranged, gives pictorial vehemence a limpidity, almost a quietism. When you stand before one of the pinnacles of his art—at the Metropolitan they include the portrait *Fray Hortensio Félix Paravicino* from Boston, the Met's own *View of Toledo*, *The Virgin of the Immaculate Conception* from Toledo, and from Madrid *The Resurrection*, *The Adoration of the Shepherds*, and *The Purification of the Temple*—you are in a fire-and-ice world, and you sweat and you shiver all at once, and you are happy to feel this way.

Most of El Greco's greatest pictures were produced in Spain, where he arrived in the mid-1570s, when he was in his mid-thirties, and lived until his death in 1614. His work is unlike anything else done in that country at that time. There had been a quirky vitality to the Spanish art of the early Renaissance, with its mixture of Flemish and Gothic influences, but by the middle of the sixteenth century the country's artists were pretty much sunk in dutiful and not always fully competent recapitulations of High Renaissance and Mannerist styles imported from Rome, Florence, and Venice. The museumgoer with a liking for all things Spanish may be tempted to believe that El Greco forms the crucial link between the dramatic Gothic of pre-Renaissance Spain and the painterly heat of Velázquez, who made a close study of El Greco's portraits—but the truth is that this

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first transcendent Spanish painter, originally named Domenikos Theotokopoulos, had begun life in Crete.

In Crete, he embarked on a flourishing career as an icon painter in a traditional Byzantine style; the retrospective at the Metropolitan begins with several works from these years. Around 1567, however, he left for Italy, where he began all over again as an artist, living first in Venice and later in Rome, and from the look of it he had something of a struggle mastering the naturalistic classicism of the High Renaissance. Professionally, he had such a hard time in Italy that finally he thought to try his luck in Spain; he first landed in Madrid, probably hoping to work at the court of Philip II, where several immense building projects were under way. When employment in Madrid was not forthcoming, he moved on to Toledo, where he lived until his death. This painter whom so many people have come to regard as the spirit of Spain was in fact an accidental Spaniard. No wonder that Jonathan Brown, in the excellent chapter on El Greco in his *Painting in Spain: 1500–1700*, observes that El Greco's career is "by any measure one of the strangest in the history of art."

We know that El Greco was a formidable intellectual, on close terms with some of the best theological, scholarly, and literary minds of his day. Born into a middle-class family, he had the benefit of a sound education; his annotated copy of Vasari still exists. Some of his most striking portraits double as records of his literary and scholarly friendships, especially the almost rapturous evocation of his poet friend Paravicino, which remains unsurpassed as a study of the intellectual intensity of a man in his early prime. El Greco's rejection of artistic precepts and precedent was a principled stand, discussed by his contemporaries. And the emotional vehemence of his work was grounded in his understanding of Counter-Reformation theology, which emphasized the immediacy of religious feeling. In some respects this penetrating thinker—who also knew how to let loose with a brush—may remind us of van Gogh, another extraordinarily thoughtful and self-analytical expressionist; both artists use the powers of the mind to focus and to intensify the fervor of the hand. In Toledo, surrounded by intellectual nourishment but pretty much on his own artistically, El Greco may have felt unconstrained. He is one of the greatest of all painters of plunging and floating and ascending figures, no doubt because he had already assimilated everything that was earthbound in tradition and was ready to give himself over to painterly abandon.

There is something dizzying about the very dimensions of the vast, often exaggeratedly vertical altarpieces that El Greco painted in the last two decades of his career. Some of the altarpieces included in the show at the Metropolitan—*The Resurrection*, *The Adoration of the Shepherds*, and *The Virgin of the Immaculate Conception*—are not only representations of hyperbolic situations, they are experiences of hyperbole. El Greco revels in these turbulent compositions, with their roller-coaster-ride arrangements of figures and their angel-swept heavens, until the entire canvas seems to rise up, defying gravity, an arc of energy in space. And El Greco knows how to match the unconventionality of his compositions with the off-kilter beauty of his saints and Madonnas and angels. These men and women, with their huge eyes and blue-

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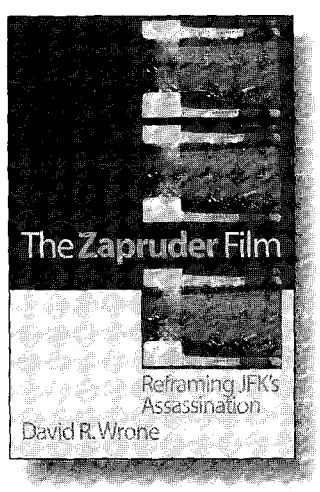

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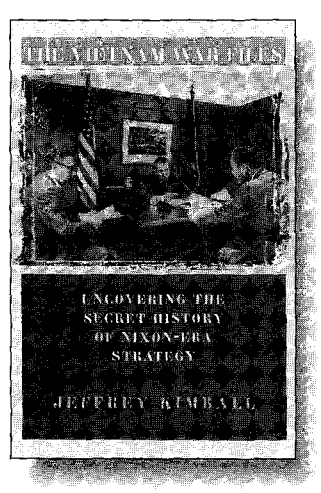

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black hair and pale skin and angular, bony physiques, are as surely derived from the Spaniards of his day as Raphael's Madonnas and courtiers are derived from the young Italians of late fifteenth-century Florence. The curious sweep of a leg or an arm or an angel's wing resolves into the curious delicacy of a dark-eyed Spanish face. These wonderfully unconventional Spanish beauties are the only actors who could possibly look right in a world so full of violations of Italianate propriety—a world where volume and void fail to construct space in the conventional Renaissance way; where space, no longer a passive receptacle filled with mobile volumes, becomes an active, anti-gravitational force that pushes against volume to create compositions with an all-stirred-together yin-and-yang power.

You can see that El Greco's stylizations are related to the stream of Mannerist thinking that had dominated much of Italian art in the years when he was working in Italy; the small heads, the exaggerated torsos and limbs, the impossibly twisted poses, the compressed snaking compositions, are all Mannerist devices. But El Greco manages to give what John Shearman once called "the stylish style" an emotional inevitability. His painterly powers are in every way unlike the cool powdery or enameled surfaces that we know from the work of Bronzino or Pontormo. He brings a radical openness to his handling of paint; he lets brushstrokes carry broad areas, he works wet into wet, and he revels in the way that the pigments interact, creating shimmers and foamings of color. His color is not like anybody else's. The compositions are vast, dramatic, light-dark orchestrations, and the full-strength hues, flooding through the altarpieces like molten rivers, set everything awhirl. In the late work of Titian, who had such an impact on El Greco, we also feel the pull of Mannerist stylizations, and Titian's combination of exaggeration and expression is in some ways related to what we find in El Greco. But El Greco turns elongation into a form of longing. He gives Mannerist elegance an emotional gravity. He discovers a harrowed elegance.

At the Metropolitan, El Greco's altarpieces have not been presented in the most striking or advantageous way. The exhibition, organized by the art historian David Davies, could have been better hung. I wonder why the tall, slender *Resurrection* was not placed on an end wall; and the late *Adoration of the Shepherds* would have looked better in the middle of a wall. It is never easy to hang a show such as this, in which some of the key elements are religious compositions that were envisioned as all-consuming experiences, as the emotional center of an entire church, or at least of a chapel or a part of a church. Such paintings are meant to gobble up attention, and when they are dropped in a retrospective in conventional museum galleries, their grandeur can seem to be scaled too big for the rooms, which indeed it is. And then there are also the omissions. There can be no definitive El Greco retrospective without *The Burial of the Count of Orgaz*, and that painting should not leave Spain, just as Titian's *Presentation of the Virgin* and *Assumption* should not leave Venice for a show in London or Washington.

If some American critics are not feeling wowed by El Greco, it may be because so many of his greatest medium-sized paintings are already so familiar. They are among the treasures of our museums, where they arrived early in the last century, when interest in El Greco was on the rise and American collectors had the wherewithal to buy. Chicago has one of the great altarpieces, *The Assumption*, which did not come to New York. Boston has lent the portrait of Paravicino, and Washington has lent the *Laocoön*, that enthralling unraveling and re-raveling of Michelangelo's passionate Hellenism. The Metropolitan itself is the proud possessor of many matchless El Grecos—*A View of Toledo*, of course; and the exquisite portrait of an older man, whose great domed head is set so gently in the ellipse of his white ruffled collar; and the unforgettable, bespectacled cardinal, his all-seeing eyes averted, his red robes arranged to create a concentrated yet supercharged geometric form that is one of the wonders of Western art. In these most penetrating of his portraits, we see El Greco deepening the lyric strain in Venetian painting in ways that lead to the psychological reverberations in the portraits of Rembrandt and Velázquez.

As for *A View of Toledo*, it is unlike anything that we know from the art of El Greco's time, and from the art of any other time. El Greco re-frames a disquieting, tumultuous landscape, which owes something to Flanders and something to Byzantium, as a mood painting in the tradition of Giorgione. The resulting vision, while firmly grounded in the particulars of a Spanish city in the late sixteenth century, is also an out-of-time-and-space aesthetic dream—and since 1929, when the picture entered the Metropolitan's collection, it has been a part of the dreamscape of New York.

WHEN AN ARTIST DISCOVERS a new conception of the work of art, as in *A View of Toledo*, we are confronted with what might be called the timeless aspect of modernity. If such discoveries sometimes seem to have a special urgency in Spanish art, it may be because in Spain, unlike in Italy, there were never the numbers of thoroughly trained and highly intelligent artists who were needed to turn today's revelations into tomorrow's instant conventions. Innovations have a way of remaining singularities in Spanish art, and no innovation has quite the singularity of Goya's etchings, which are to my mind the core of his achievement, and which were, many of them, not merely not comprehended in his own day but literally not even known. Two of Goya's great print cycles—*The Disasters of War* and *The Disparates*—were not even published until the second half of the nineteenth century, decades after Goya's death in 1828, and only twenty-seven sets of his first great cycle, *The Caprichos*, were sold in the four years after it was published in 1799. True, Delacroix and some other early-nineteenth-century artists were aware of *The Caprichos*, but when we look at this immense graphic achievement today—at *The Caprichos*, *The Disasters of War*, *The Tauromaquia*, and the rest—we may still feel that they have a peculiar flavor, at once harried and elegant, harsh and clear-eyed and fantastical, that is like nothing else in art.

Robert Hughes is a rapt observer of Goya's graphic work, and in his chapter on *The Caprichos* and his sections on the other cycles he revels in the unfolding opportunities to explore Goya's visionary merry-go-round, with all its horrors and fascinations. It is not surprising that Hughes responds so fully to Goya's prints, for his distinctive critical voice, a combination of cut-to-the-quick phrasing and striking metaphorical conceits, might be said to echo Goya's unpredictable mix of the strikingly matter-of-fact and the crazily analogical. Goya's mixture of picaresque and visionary elements can be traced back, piece by piece, to elements in

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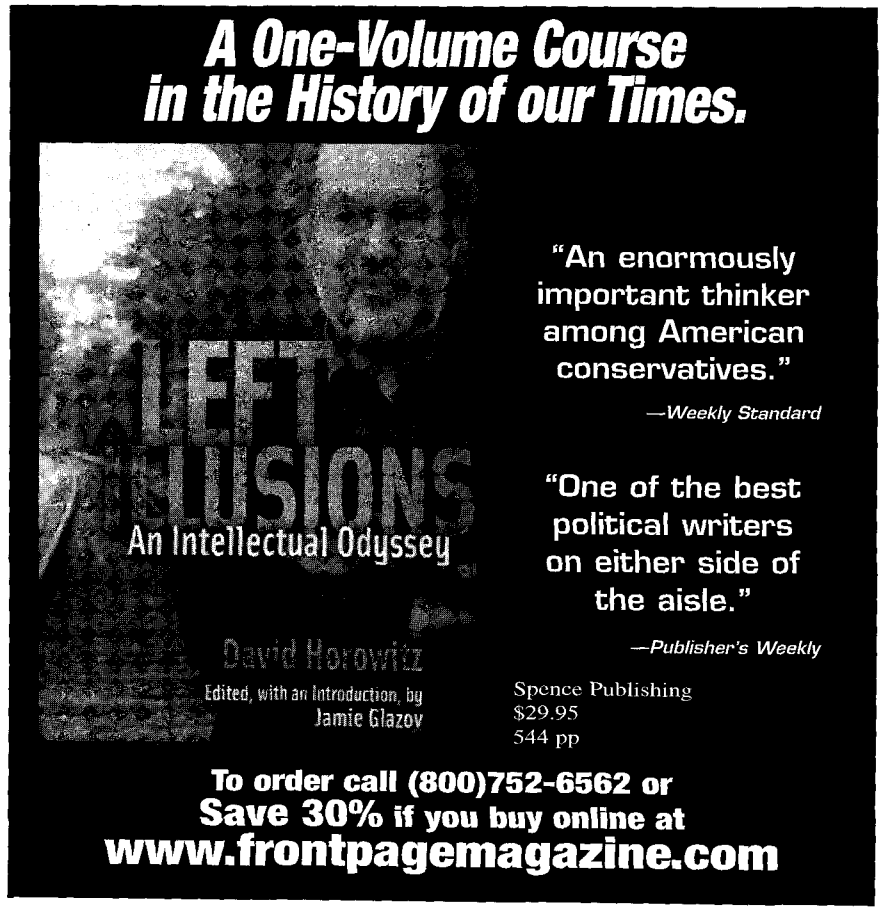
the art of his own time, both high and not so high, and yet he has such a unique way of intermingling and juxtaposing all the elements that they ultimately compose a world all his own. The settings in many of the prints are almost abstract, with interiors and exteriors suggested elliptically or not at all. Goya's enormous cast of characters, despite the specificity of many of the costumes and the pulled-from-the-headlines nature of some of their activities, are meeting in a stark landscape of the imagination—a stage wiped nearly clean, as if for a Greek tragedy or a production of *Waiting for Godot*.

TRAGEDY HAS RARELY BEEN AS unfussy as in Goya's prints, and Hughes brings a fiery attentiveness to his writing about these difficult works. He is enthralled by the quickening spirit of *The Caprichos*, in which, as he says, "each design is a single shot." And we can see how the variety of Goya's prints is related to the improvisatory zest of his drawings, which, Hughes observes, "exalt the scribble, the puddle, the blot, the smear, the suggestive beauty of the unfinished—and, above all, the primal struggle of light and dark, that flux from which all consciousness of shape is born." When Goya moves from drawing to printmaking, the copperplate on which he inscribes lines that are then etched in acid becomes a realm of absolute freedom, where the attack of the mark ranges from a rococo lightness to the heaving darkness we know from Rembrandt's prints. In *The Disasters of War*, Goya incorporates aquatint, a technique for rendering areas of the surface in an overall gray tone, further enriching his graphic repertory. Hughes observes of *The Caprichos* that Goya often "enjoyed the contrast between the abstract severity of some compositions and their intense human emotions." And even when the compositions are not built around a few starkly angled forms, the white of the paper can become an unsparing backdrop against which we observe the nightmarish carnival of human life.

Goya's print work has a variety that is sometimes giddy, sometimes terrifying. He caricatures the arranged marriages of fashionable Spain, he recalls the techniques of the great matadors, he celebrates the heroic exploits of women in war. Goya revels in dark dreams, he casts an unsparing eye on the travails of men and women who are tortured and imprisoned, and he records the atrocities of war with a steadiness unheard of in his time and rarely seen afterward. Hughes remarks that Goya, "like many artists both great and little, was a man of nuanced and somewhat contradictory opinions," and printmaking becomes the perfect medium through which Goya can present his paradoxical feelings and experiences as an almost stream-of-consciousness flood of images—a flood that embraces everything that the mind can comprehend. We see a woman in the desolation of a prison, men inexplicably flying through the air, the nasty confrontations of youth and age, the bravura of the bullfighter. The unruliness of Goya's imagination meets the messiness of life, and out of that confrontation comes this great outpouring of images in black and white. Goya's line, often tense or terse, sometimes almost seismographic, records the fever charts of an imagination that is startlingly heroic—and modest, too.

What is striking in this unfailingly accessible and wonderfully clear-eyed book, which comes from the hand of a writer who has been known, in his television appearances, for giving high culture a masculine swagger, is how winningly unprepossessing a guide Hughes can be. He never oversteps, never encroaches on the unknowable aspects of a life that, truth to tell, is fairly scantily documented, especially in the artist's earlier decades. At the outset he takes us firmly in hand by writing in an autobiographical mode, recalling that when he was still an adolescent he bought "a poor second state" of *Capricho 43, The sleep of reason brings forth monsters*, which he describes as an "ineffably moving image of the intellectual beset with doubts and night terrors, slumped on his desk with owls gyring around his poor perplexed head like the flying foxes that I knew so well from my childhood." Hughes goes on to reflect on what Goya's critique of Spanish Catholicism meant to an impressionable boy who was growing up Catholic in mid-twentieth-century Australia. But after that warm beginning, as he begins to lay out the first decades of this artist who was born in 1746, readers may feel a bit unsure of their way. We are waiting for the complexities of Goya's vision to emerge, and all that a biographer can point to among the early work is a striking series of tapestry designs that suggest



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not the force of the mature Goya but a kind of rustic rococo, a slightly folkloric Fragonard.

Only in the late 1780s, when he is in his forties, does Goya begin to draw artistic sustenance from his contacts with the progressive intellectual and political circles that were taking hold in Spain. At this point Hughes's book really takes off, moving forward on two separate but closely related tracks. Hughes juxtaposes his unabashedly personal experience of Goya's work with sections in which he lays out the tortured history of late-eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century Spain. And as we turn the pages we begin to understand how the all-too-frequently hopeless struggles of Spain's progressive intelligentsia filtered—sometimes directly, sometimes indirectly—into Goya's art. Goya's paradoxical vision is the product of a country where paradox was in the very air that people breathed. Writing of the Napoleonic years, when Spain was in the midst of an extraordinarily brutal and chaotic war, Hughes points out that the people's "will and courage ... were sustained, in part, by an impenetrable ignorance and backwardness, in which blind nationalism took precedence over all the other emotions that liberalism might have had to offer." As much as Hughes's *Goya* is a portrait of the artist, the book is also a portrait of Spain, a country that has fascinated Hughes for many years. There may be no artist of Goya's time—indeed, in the entire history of Western art—who took in so wide a range of society, or who was capable of bringing the same spirit, at once generous and honest, to the official portraits that he painted for the royal family and to the etchings dedicated to the follies of contemporary life that were probably understood only by a few close friends.

There are passages in this book where Hughes is too quick to make an analogy to contemporary experience. Writing of a painting called *Highwaymen Attacking a Coach*, which was designed as a decoration for a fashionable home, he does not need to observe that "it is as though some hostess in Bridgehampton decided, for her and her guests' amusement, to decorate her living room with a scene of armed thugs plundering a car wreck on the Long Island Expressway." More often, though, Hughes knows how to use his confident conversational tone for immediate clarification. Goya had a gift for bravura painterly renderings of fabrics and fashions, and Hughes gets at the psychological impact of these virtuoso passages when he reminds us that for portrait sitters, "the index of their vanity was, of course, their mode of dress, which Goya recorded with insatiable attentiveness, curiosity, and pleasure." Hughes has a special feeling for Goya's representations of worldly thinkers, and he finds in the beautiful portrait of Gaspar de Jovellanos "a marvelous image of the troubled and pensive intellectual in power." Of *The Tauromaquia*, that great late series of bullfight scenes, he says that it "has the peculiar grace that art about art can sometimes achieve; it has the fascinated reverence that Degas, decades later, would display in his drawings and paintings of the ballet." And Hughes offers a vivid portrait of the old Goya—stone deaf, living in exile in Bordeaux—by drawing our attention to one of the last etchings that Goya ever did, of an old man on a swing. What we see, Hughes explains, is "the crazy old barefoot sage, ignoring gravity and cackling to himself like a Zen patriarch absorbed in a private but cosmic joke: Goya himself, high in the air." This is writing with a natural, infectious pulse.

HUGHES DOES NOT ATTEMPT to force Goya's heterodox achievement into a single overall shape. Goya's work is too various to admit of tidy explanations. He painted portraits of beautiful women and prominent intellectuals and kings and queens. He was a master of the picturesque mural. His smaller paintings include studies of rapes, of cannibals, of prisons, and of madhouses. His studies of dead birds and of a head of mutton have a hallowed place in the art of the still life. *The Third of May, 1808*—that glimpse, at once terrifying and monumental, of a young man's final instant, before his life is extinguished by Napoleon's firing squad—is perhaps the greatest of all paintings of the violence of war. And the "Black Paintings," in which Goya enlarged upon his nightmare vision as a printmaker to populate the walls of his own home with midnight-dark enigmas, are pinnacles of visionary painting.

The extraordinary range of Goya's work was partly a reflection of the period that his life spanned, from 1746 to 1828, from the triumph of the rococo to the flowering of romanticism and the beginnings of realism. If there is a unity in his work, some vision that relates the early studies of upper-class pleasures to the portraits of royalty and to the dying patriot in *The Third of May*, it has to do with Goya's insistence on drawing each of his figures from the vicissitudes of direct observations rather than from the heroic dimensions of academic practice. Goya was aware that he was taking a radical view of the human form. In a now-famous letter to Spain's premier art academy in 1792, he observed that it was a scandal "to hear nature despised in favor of Greek statues by those who know neither one nor the other and are not conscious of how the smallest part of nature overwhelms and amazes those who know most." If there is a quality of vulnerability about each of Goya's men and women—something almost childlike or doll-like in even the noblest of these beings—it is because these are men and women who have been formed without recourse to the classical models that had, during the Renaissance and Baroque periods, been a sort of pattern against

Breath Heron

As if on cue, the heron's a rising and gliding apparition, casting no shadow
On the packed snow I'm running over, running away as usual from whatever
Ails me. Frigid air taken in at the mouth, to mix with the warm world of
Tongue and palate, gums at bloodheat: it informs with its *frisson* of chill
The spongy honeycomb of lungs, and lives a few expansive instants there

Before turning like a swimmer and journeying back and out into frosted air
As a wispcloud of steam, the sign of my being here and now—as that heron
Tilting between branches is here and now, taking the air in and letting it out
As he angles through it and over the rise and out of sight, seeking a safe
Still fluent place to feed, calmly, before this keen cold stiffens everything.

EAMON GRENNAN

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which artists measured not only their images of gods and saints, but also their impressions of servants and slaves. With Goya, form loses its norm.

"There are no rules in painting," Goya explained in that letter to the academy, and his words on that occasion will stand, along with Chardin's equally skeptical address to the French Academy in 1765, as one of the great eighteenth-century harbingers of the avant-garde. Jonathan Brown, an acute student of Spanish art, quotes Goya's letter in the introduction to *Picasso and the Spanish Tradition*, a challenging anthology that he edited a few years ago. Brown believes that there is in Spanish art what he refers to as a "counterclassical" tradition, of which El Greco, Velázquez, Goya, and finally Picasso is each a part. Brown sees this tradition as "inherently skeptical of artistic authority," and he believes that all these artists regarded "the classical style with a mixture of respect and irreverence." Brown traces this tradition back to the century before El Greco, and argues that in Spain classicism was always an option rather than an imperative, a view "which might be characterized as provincial by many upholders of the classical canon" but that Brown believes has an integrity of its own.

IT IS THIS COUNTERCLASSICAL spirit to which artists in England and France responded as they began to get to know Spanish art in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Some of that story was related in the "Manet/Velázquez" exhibition at the Metropolitan last spring. I have to confess that I found the show somewhat overbearing. There was too much to see—too many small prints and documentary photographs, all of which were interesting, and all of which, together, drew attention away from the paintings on display. The organizers seem to have come to the project with certain scholarly ambitions, and these ambitions, although usefully presented in the catalogue, made for visual chaos on the gallery wall, which left me worrying about a growing taste at the Met for overstuffing galleries with show-offy scholarly apparatus. ("Crossing the Channel," this fall's exhibit about Romantic painting in Britain and France, suffers in the same way.)

But there was a much bigger problem with "Manet/Velázquez," for the face-off of the title proved to be an impossibly uneven one. When you compare Manet with Velázquez, the Frenchman's work invariably ends up looking perfunctory, half-baked. There is no denying that Manet's glosses on Velázquez and Goya have an immediacy that felt liberating to Cézanne, Matisse, and Picasso, and in recent years we have certainly seen how Manet's vagaries can be re-interpreted, through postmodern eyes, as dazzling, proto-Dadaist obfuscations. But I know many contemporary artists who have always felt ambivalent about Manet, and I think the time has come to ask ourselves whether his radicalism is not in act a slightly cynical form of showmanship. A small but growing number of observers are beginning to suspect that Manet will one day look far less important than he does today. The French paintings that held me at "Manet/Velázquez" were not by Manet; they were Courbet's titanic study of a Spanish dancer, *Adela Guerrero*, and Corot's haunting reverie on the end of the heroic portrait, *Man in Armor*. Compared with the avant-gardism of Courbet and Corot, Manet's progressivism looks like a form of sentimentalism.

Whatever one feels about Manet's relationship with Velázquez and Goya, there can be no question about the formative impact that Spanish painting had on modern art. Gertrude Stein, in the opening sentences of her weirdly lovable book about Picasso, first published in France in 1938, put it this way: "Painting in the nineteenth century was only done in France and by Frenchmen, apart from that painting did not exist, in the twentieth century it was done in France but by Spaniards." Like many of Stein's oracular pronouncements, this one plunges headlong into absurdity only to emerge with some strange version of the truth. In the closing sentence of his book *Saturn: An Essay on Goya*, published in England in 1957, André Malraux was making a not entirely dissimilar point when he announced, "And now modern painting begins," as if without Goya none of the rest of it would have been possible.

Some may see in such pronouncements—and in Jonathan Brown's argument for counterclassicism—a rather obvious and even coarse plea for the relevance of Spanish art, a refusal to accept the pastness of the past. And yet when you spend an hour with the work of El Greco or Goya you are almost inevitably going to feel how fervently they wanted to break with what was known in art, which is not of course to say that what

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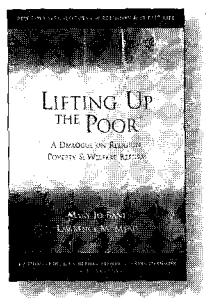

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they imagined a modern art to be is what modern art has become. What may ultimately be so important about the nineteenth and twentieth century's embrace of Goya, and especially of El Greco, is how that passionate embrace drew modern art, at its very inception, into the great line of tradition. These Spaniards are with us, but they are also, simultaneously, ahead of us and behind us. By resisting historical analysis, El Greco and Goya make their own history, in much the way that *A View of Toledo*, that darkling yet daylit vision, resists topographical realism in order to reveal another kind of truth. ■

Helen Vendler
Ravening Through

W. B. YEATS: A LIFE
VOLUME II: THE ARCH-POET
By R.F. Foster
(Oxford University Press, 798 pp., $45)

IT IS 1915, AND WILLIAM BUTLER Yeats, almost fifty years of age, has long been a well-known figure both in London (where he has rooms near the British Museum) and in Dublin (where he is one of the directors of the Abbey Theatre, which he co-founded with his friend and patroness Lady Augusta Gregory, on whose estate in Galway, Coole Park, he lives and writes during the summers). His political activity is to some degree in suspension: Home Rule for Ireland has been put on hold by the British parliament until the end of the war. Already taking a long retrospective view of his life, Yeats has completed the first volume of his autobiography, *Reveries Over Childhood and Youth*. And yet for all his aesthetic and personal achievement, his life feels incomplete. In 1914, in the prefatory poem to his volume *Responsibilities*, Yeats had asked his ancestors' pardon for not continuing the family line:

> Pardon that for a barren passion's sake,
> Although I have come close on forty-nine,
> I have no child, I have nothing but a book,
> Nothing but that to prove your blood and mine.

Yeats's "barren passion" has been fixated since his twenties on the heroically beautiful and politically passionate Maud Gonne, a wealthy girl of British stock who has become an advocate of Irish independence from England. But she and Yeats differ on the means to independence: he believes in parliamentary measures, she in illegal revolutionary ones. At no time is Gonne inclined to marry Yeats; at no time (though he has had lovers) is he inclined to marry anyone else. In 1915, not only does Yeats find his political and personal life at a standstill, but he also feels increasingly burdened by administering the contentious affairs of the Abbey, and by having to support his brilliant but feckless painter-father (now living in New York) and his two unmarried sisters Lily and Lolly, whose income from the Cuala Press continues to be uncertain. (Yeats's brother Jack has yet to come into his fame as a painter.)

It is at this point of middle age that the second volume of R.F. Foster's life of Yeats begins. Like its predecessor, *The Apprentice Mage*, which appeared in 1997, it is a marvel of integrated accomplishment. Foster, Irish himself, is the Carroll Professor of Irish History at Oxford, and he has written a historian's biography, setting Yeats's works within an intimidatingly complex web of life events and attendant persons. The book is resolutely and eloquently composed, keeping for the most part an admirable equanimity with respect to the less conventional parts of Yeats's life. (The hardest gobbets for Foster to swallow are Yeats's occult obsessions and his late fascination with eugenic research; but even these Foster treats with a historian's detachment, letting us know how many other artists and intellectuals of the time were trapped in the same bizarre interests.)

Yeats's life comes to any researcher in a welter of paper. Beside his published prose, poetry, and plays, there are the voluminous drafts of the writings, the prose unpublished in the poet's lifetime, and some thousands of extant letters, gradually appearing in print under the general editorship of John Kelly. Then there are the works of Yeats's notable contemporaries in England and Ireland (memoirs, letters, journals, autobiographies), as well as the documents of the institutions with which Yeats concerned himself (the Abbey Theatre, the Senate). Beyond all these, there remain the documents of Ireland's contemporary history: in this volume the Easter Rising of 1916, the independence of Southern Ireland and partition of 1920, the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1921, the civil war between Free Staters and Republicans of 1922, and the implacable subsequent government executions of those irreconcilable to the Free State. Foster has emerged from the massive archive with a story impressively in order. In a triumph of deft arrangement, he intertwines the historical, the literary, the professional, and the personal throughout the sixteen briskly advancing chapters of this second volume.

In a pre-emptive strike in his introduction, Foster defends the sort of social and historical biography that he has undertaken. (There is no previous biography of Yeats so comprehensive and wide-ranging on historical matters and political contexts.) He buttresses his emphasis on the life as a channel to the work with a prefatory quotation from Yeats: "Works of lyric genius, when the circumstance of their origin is known, gain a second beauty, passing as it were out of literature and becoming life." Yet this sentence is as cannily phrased as any other remark by Yeats. What does "circumstance" mean here? Feelings? Memories? External stimuli? The "as it were"—turning the whole process fictive—suggests that no lyric work can truly pass out of literature and become "life." The most one could claim for these words of Yeats is that they recognize the (universally acknowledged, if indefinable) continuum between life and art.

The biographer's question—which of the circumstances of its origin would illuminate this work?—is, or ought to be, a particular one: it is not enough to describe the life in the hope that somehow this general account will confer that "second beauty" on the writer's works. Nor does Foster disagree: "If the quantity of ... sources is now gigantic, this

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does not mean that there is nothing new to say—even about the composition of as closely scrutinized a poem as 'Sailing to Byzantium.' " Foster wants to contribute to the illumination of Yeats's poems: he quotes them at length and comments on them. Yet his comments tend to be those of a sensible and well-informed reader rather than those of an interpreter; he is more likely to mention allusions than to offer new ideas. Literary contexts here are thinner than historical ones. It is in the re-telling of the life that Foster excels.

YEATS'S LIFE IS AN ENTHRALLing one. He had a finger in almost every pie, political and literary, of Ireland during his active lifetime. With restless energy, alone or with other writers and sponsors, he founded societies and journals, created a significant theater, carried on extended literary campaigns, kept up a barrage of letters, formed pressure groups, and in general helped to drive a new culture into being—all the while writing unforgettable poems. He detested the term "Anglo-Irish" and insisted that he was simply Irish, like anyone else born in Ireland; but his equivocal position as a Protestant in the nationalist cause, in an Ireland overwhelmingly Catholic once Ulster had been partitioned off, left him open to misunderstanding (at the least) and hyperbolic opprobrium (at the worst) from both Catholic and Protestant opponents. As Foster puts it, "He was seen as inadequately Irish and even pro-imperial by hard-line republicans, as a heretic with a cesspool mind by Catholic zealots, and an intellectual troublemaker by like-minded ex-Unionists who simply wanted a quiet life."

The poet's combative personality gave no quarter when backed to the wall, but his positions were unpopular ones. Yeats believed in religious tolerance, and he was dismayed to see the Free State become increasingly hostile to the values of its Protestant inhabitants, as it forbade divorce, instituted censorship (by means of an "Evil Literature Committee"), and embraced an educational system aiming at Catholic indoctrination. As a senator in the Irish parliament, he made fervent speeches against such measures, without effect. His fellow senators did allow him to supervise the creation of the Free State's new coinage—a comic story in itself, with high-minded citizens objecting to the depiction of pigs on their money. (The handsome Yeatsian coins have now vanished in favor of the featureless euro.)

In this second volume of Foster's biography, we see the tragic ends of Yeats's friends and acquaintances, the decay and death of the gifted. The actress Florence Farr, teaching school in Ceylon, dies of cancer; Robert Gregory, Augusta Gregory's son, is shot down by mistake during World War I; Aubrey Beardsley's sister Mabel dies prematurely of cancer; acquaintances and fellow poets (Patrick Pearse, Thomas MacDonagh) are executed by the British after the Easter Rising; Lady Gregory's nephew Hugh Lane sinks with the *Lusitania*; Yeats's friend Kevin O'Higgins is assassinated because he ordered the execution of Republican prisoners; the disturbed would-be poet Margot Ruddock goes insane and dies in an asylum; Eva Gore-Booth dies of cancer; her sister Constance Markievicz dies in poverty, as does Yeats's old friend George William Russell (who wrote as "AE"); Lady Gregory succumbs to a recurrence of breast cancer after a mastectomy; Yeats's sister Lolly grows increasingly erratic and aggressive; his wonderfully intelligent and intuitive sister Lily suffers for years from an undiagnosed illness (subsequently discovered to be pituitary overgrowth); his original and ingenious painter-father dies in New York. And though Maud Gonne's daughter Iseult ("a girl who knew all Dante once") does not die, she immures herself in a marriage to an abusive man, following the example of her mother. Maud, Yeats's Helen of Troy, lives on, irreconciled to the compromise of the Free State, estranged and bitter. The aging Yeats watches as people fall into ruin around him and asks grimly, "Why should not old men be mad?"

> Some think it matter of course that chance
> Should starve good men and bad advance,
> That if their neighbours figured plain,
> As though upon a lighted screen,
> No single story would they find
> Of an unbroken happy mind,
> A finish worthy of the start.
> Young men know nothing of this sort,
> Observant old men know it well;
> And when they know what old books tell,
> And that no better can be had,
> Know why an old man should be mad.

Against these elegiac contexts, with no finish worthy of the start, Foster sets the surprising new events of the crowded last twenty-five years of Yeats's life: his marriage, his fatherhood, his friendship with Ezra Pound, his restoration (as an occasional residence) of an Anglo-Norman tower in Galway ("Thoor Ballylee"), some new and enlivening quarrels (especially with Sean O'Casey), the receipt of the Nobel Prize in 1920, the battle with London over Hugh Lane's equivocal bequest of paintings, a series of flirtations and affairs, and the surge of writing derived from his wife's mediumship. Georgie Hyde Lees (known as "George") was eager to distract her husband from his continuing longing—on their honeymoon—for Maud Gonne; knowing (and sharing) Yeats's occult interests, George pretended to do automatic writing. Soon the pretense turned into a talent for trance states and mediumistic advice, and the practice, which became for many years the foundation of the Yeatses' marriage, was recorded in scores of "occult notebooks" which themselves were quarried to produce Yeats's late prose work

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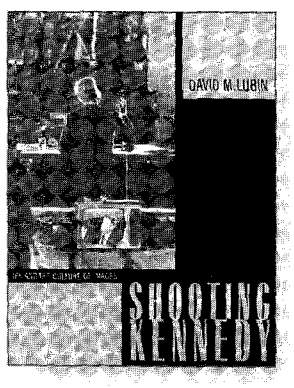

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A Vision (1925, revised edition 1937). In time, two children were born to the Yeatses: first a daughter, Anne, an artist who died last year, and then a son, Michael, an economist and a diplomat.

NO ONE IS BETTER PLACED than Foster, who has written a history of modern Ireland, to track the political cross-currents flowing through Yeats's lifetime, and to reflect on Yeats's political opinions and actions. These are exercised in controversies with friends as well as enemies, and respond to major external events. Conflict with friends never ceases. The great document of that quarrel is the ambivalent elegy "Easter 1916," a poem written not long after the Rising but prudently withheld from journal publication until 1920. A letter from Maud Gonne, who would have preferred a piece of propaganda, exhibits her characteristic reaction: "No I don't like your poem, it isn't worthy of you & above all it isn't worthy of the subject.... [I]t is not ... a living thing which our race would treasure & repeat, such as a poet like you might have given to your nation & which would have avenged our material failure by its spiritual beauty."

Yeats's dismay at the violence on all sides during the Civil War set him against friends in both camps, Republicans and Free Staters: the anarchy of the war produced the great sequences on human aggression, "Nineteen Hundred and Nineteen," "Meditations in Time of Civil War," and "Blood and the Moon." Yeats's controversies with enemies arose from the head-on collisions between his principles and those of conservative Trinity College professors and Catholic opinion-makers; the latter had a field day with "Leda and the Swan," which followed hard upon Yeats's spirited defense of Joyce's genius after the condemnation of *Ulysses* in 1924.

It is true, of course, that external events—the Easter Rising, the Civil War, World War I, the Nobel Prize, the appearance of European communism and fascism—had a role in stimulating Yeats's writing; but it is easy to forget, reading Foster's vivid evocation of these causes, that true poetry, according to Yeats, is excited only by a trouble within the poet's self. A famous Yeatsian aphorism (from the prose text *Per Amica Silentia Lunae*, written in 1918) asserts that "we make out of the quarrel with others, rhetoric, but of the quarrel with ourselves, poetry." Yeats had to quell his own tendency toward propaganda by repeated reminders against "rhetoric":

> For those that love the world serve it
> in action,
> Grow rich, popular, and full of
> influence,
> And should they paint or write,
> still it is action:
> The struggle of the fly in marmalade.

Poets who desert their true subject, the quarrel with themselves, fail, either by crowd-pleasing posturing or by self-deception:

> The rhetorician would deceive his
> neighbours,
> The sentimentalist himself; while art
> Is but a vision of reality.

In defining art as "a vision of reality," Yeats gives equal stress to its two components—the accurate rendition of the real, and the aesthetic effort by which the poet embodies the real in a "vision," projecting it onto a symbolic plane. A biographer needs to see, in the poems, both the reality and the vision; Foster, unsurprisingly, is more alert to the former than to the latter.

Foster's impatience with the visionary plane is manifest in his treatment of Yeats's most erratic work, *A Vision*, a collection of occult and symbolic essays, big with graphs, cones, intersecting lines, wheels of lunar phases, and so on. Having patiently enough described the gears and theories of Yeats's "System"—which was compiled in the spirit of Blake's remark "I must create my own system, or be enslaved by another man's"—Foster sums it up with a certain acerbity:

> *A Vision* represents a little of the best of [Yeats], and most of the worst. Leaps of imagination, audacious strokes, unforgettably sonorous phrases, and brilliant imagery come in flashes.... But far more of the material is ponderous, self-regarding, wildly didactic, inconsistent, and unconvincing. The generalizations on which the archetypes are erected, the arbitrary and self-referencing symbolism, the incomprehensibility of it all to anyone not already versed in his own thought and life, rob it of any general intellectual interest.

There speaks the frustrated rationalist confronting Yeats's personal mix of hermetic philosophy, lunar psychology, and Viconian history, a concoction absolutely indefensible as "real" by ordinary standards. Here, by contrast, is Yeats's fellow writer Sean O'Faolain in *The Irish Times*, admitting Yeats's "arrogance" in creating a world-philosophy but understanding the poet's need to integrate the personal and the universal: "That has been his task and his torment, to find a philosophy in which man is at once free and creative, absolute possessor of himself in this life, and possessor at the same time of everything that is outside the individual substance of his body and his span. The arrogance of it is immense."

PERHAPS *A VISION* IS INTOLERable to anyone not deeply interested in the symbolic dimensions of Yeats's thought, just as Blake's "prophetic books"—edited by Yeats in his youth, and a signal influence on his work—are wearying to the rational mind and loved only by Blakeans. (In graduate school I had prepared to write my dissertation on Yeats with an independent study of Blake's long poems, and the expert in early eighteenth-century poetry who had generously taken me on for the Blake reading, when he encountered *A Vision* in directing my thesis, exclaimed, "The *awful* things you are making me read!") Yeats said he wrote *A Vision* because he wished that his favorite poets had written down *their* "philosophy." The drive underlying all his researches in magic and the occult came from finding himself a "naturally religious" person with no religion to suit his needs. As AE, his oldest friend, put it:

> The poet was naturally idealist. His father was sceptical and because of this early influence there are layers of faith & scepticism in Yeats['s] mind. It was I think to get rid of the sceptical element in himself so that he might have a whole faith that he adventured into magic and spiritualism hoping for the clear fact or experience, or sign, which would enable him to have an untroubled faith.

A Vision remains a curious testament of self-making, often bewildering to others. Pound reported: "Yeats ... queer in his head about 'moon,' ... whole new metaphysics about 'Moon,' very very very bug house." Even George Yeats herself, so indispensable to *A Vision*'s occult base,

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doubted its value to the poetry, writing in 1925 to her young friend Thomas MacGreevy that "there's nothing in his verse worth preserving but the personal. All the pseudo-mystico-intellecto-nationalistico stuff of the last fifteen years isn[']t worth a trouser-button."

The most personally revealing part of *A Vision* remains the psychological section in which Yeats assigns contemporary and past thinkers and writers to appropriate phases of the moon. He believed himself to belong to phase seventeen ("The *Daimonic* Man"), just a little after the perfection of phase fourteen, the full of the moon. His exemplars for phase seventeen include Dante and Shelley, poets who, although immersed in the world, found themselves compelled to a Unity of Being attainable only by turning away from external affairs and seeking "simplification through intensity":

> Men of this phase are almost always partisans, propagandists and gregarious; yet because of the Mask of simplification ... they hate parties, crowds, propaganda. Shelley out of phase writes pamphlets, and dreams of converting the world, or of turning man of affairs and upsetting governments, and yet returns again and again to ... two images of solitude.... Dante suffering injustice and the loss of Beatrice, found divine justice and the heavenly Beatrice.

It was by meditating on the divergent temptations of idealism and political engagement that Yeats found his last poetic ambition: "to hold in a single thought reality and justice." Idealists forget reality in their dream of justice; realists forget justice in their insistence on fact. The power of Yeats's late poetry comes from its binocular vision holding together, in an embodied aesthetic form, what is and what ought to be.

TOGETHER WITH HIS DUTIFUL if repelled summaries of *A Vision,* Foster inserts brief accounts of the stark Noh-influenced plays that Yeats composed during these latter years; except for the realistic *Purgatory,* he remains cool to them. But he re-tells with brio the outbreak of bien-pensant protest following the mounting at the Abbey of Sean O'Casey's *The Plough and the Stars,* which took a less than reverential view of the Easter Rising. Foster allows indignation into his tone when he reaches a later episode: Yeats's rejection for the Abbey of O'Casey's World War I play *The Silver Tassie.* Foster characterizes Yeats's letter to O'Casey as a "torpedo" exhibiting "high-handedness," a document "arrogant and hurtful." In the letter, Yeats argues that art cannot be made out of didacticism, saying that O'Casey's Irish plays sprang out of his own lived feelings, but that *The Silver Tassie* merely expresses "opinions" (in Yeats's usage, a word meaning "the clichés of the moment," such as those found in newspaper editorials). "What business have we," asks Yeats, "with anything but the unique":

> You are not interested in the great war, you never stood on its battlefields or walked its hospitals and so write out of your opinions. You illustrate those opinions by a series of almost unrelated scenes as you might in a leading article.... Among the things that dramatic action must burn up are the author's opinions; while he is writing he has no business to know anything that is not a portion of that action. Do you suppose for one moment that Shakespeare educated Hamlet and King Lear by telling them what he thought and believed? ...
>
> This is a hateful letter to write ... and all the more so, because I cannot advise you to amend the play.... I see nothing for it but a new theme, something you have found and no newspaper writer has ever found. What business have we with anything but the unique.
>
> Put the dogmatism of this letter down to splenetic age and forgive it.

Not everyone will find this letter high-handed, arrogant, and hurtful. That the rejection hurt O'Casey nobody can doubt, but to characterize it as "hurtful" in intent amounts to an accusation of intent to wound. What could Yeats do but stand up for—and give reasons to support—his lifelong principled repudiation of didactic art that issued from a prior ideology rather than from a unique (and conflicted) feeling? He had thought too long about the problem of the didactic, as he encountered it in his own self, to be lenient toward it.

It is to Foster's credit that such partisan lapses in tone are rare, given the fact that the tenor of his own mind is not Yeatsian. He cares about Yeats, obviously; but he does not feel entirely at home within the Yeatsian sensibility. He is at his best with a story in hand, and he has a genius for the telling quotation. There are stories here of every variety—appalling, funny, grotesque, sad, amorous. Many of the grotesque and amusing ones are, needless to say, furnished by the occult, among them the tale of Yeats's credulous admiration of one David Wilson's "metallic homunculus," which "received and amplified voices from the spirit world." It was described by its creator as "a kind of ear-hole into the unknown region"; when addressed (in Arabic) it introduced "John Dee, Paracelsus, Oscar Wilde, and ... Leo [Africanus]." All of these visitors, according to Yeats, "seemed anxious for us to know that there was a universal mind and that if we spoke to them, it was as but links with this mind." What is always striking in the occult stories is the disproportion between the shabby and fraudulent means and the lofty Yeatsian conclusions.

THE APPALLING STORIES ARE those concerning events during the years between the granting of Irish independence and the final consolidation—after continued fighting—of the Free State. The notorious "Black and Tans" (auxiliary forces in the thousands employed by the British to back up the Royal Irish Constabulary) were carrying out violent acts unobstructed: in November 1920 the Yeatses heard that a pregnant mother of three had been shot in Kiltartan, Lady Gregory's territory, and in Dublin gunfire became common. In that same November, Michael Collins's forces shot fourteen off-duty British army officers, and in retaliation the British military, firing on a Sunday crowd in a football stadium, killed twelve civilians. In June 1922, when Yeats, George, and their two small children were in residence at the Tower, the Republicans (who were regularly torching Ascendancy houses nearby) decided to blow up the bridge next to the Tower. George "described the incident coolly to Ottoline Morrell":

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> The men gave us 1½ hours warning. I consulted them as to where the safest place would be to bring the children & maids & they said half way up the tower.... After two minutes, two roars came & then a hail of falling masonry & gravel.... Since then we have both felt rather ill & our hearts both hopping & stopping.... The explosions were heard at Loughrea 16 miles off.

Things were no more peaceful when the Yeatses returned to Dublin, where the Free State was executing Republican prisoners, thereby provoking Republican reprisals. George "found herself dodging bullets in Grafton Street," and in December 1922 (the month of Yeats's election to the Senate) the Yeats house in Merrion Square was fired upon: "One bullet came into the nursery and knocked plaster out of the wall, hitting (though not injuring) George, who was soothing Anne on her knee. Another bullet entered the drawing-room window, passed through the folding doors into the bedroom beyond, and embedded itself in the wall." Foster comments: "By the end of February 1923 thirty-seven senators' houses had gone up in flames." Terence Brown, in his admirable life of Yeats, quotes the poet Austin Clarke on the state of affairs in Dublin:

> Everything here has become darker and Dublin is as ugly and violent as Belfast now.... It seems to me that a self-destructive period is beyond the expression of verse.... If one were purely a dramatist and sufficiently aloof one might be able to study the amazing maelstrom of revengeful passions, cupidity and ... falsehood that has swept the people of every shade of opinion and transformed quiet citizens into bloody-minded disciples of force. But silence seems best.

To Yeats, silence did not seem best. The "self-destructive period" was so much not "beyond the expression of verse" that it produced an explosion of great sequences. Much of the tense poetry of the later years was occasioned by Yeats's sustained investigation of the roots of violence in denial, fantasy, and a socially approved code of brutal enmities:

> We had fed the heart on fantasies,
> The heart's grown brutal from the fare;
> More substance in our enmities
> Than in our love.

Yeats did not lack courage in staying the turbulent course of Irish independence, in attempting to shape the contours of the new state, and, above all, in subjecting to the powerful and painful concentration of verse the human inclination to recurrent mutual slaughter.

THE AMOROUS STORIES OF THE latter years are hard to take seriously, and Foster treats them with vivacity. Yeats (who in 1934 underwent a vasectomy in the hope that it would correct his sexual impotence) depended on new affairs with a variety of accommodating women, including two lesbians, to stimulate a surge of erotic feeling that engendered the writing of poems. George—apparently glad to have her aging husband off her hands from time to time—cooperated in his departures for trips and house stays with his lovers, writing them solicitous notes about his medications and his requisite naps. There is pathos in these liaisons, and absurdity; but there is also spirit and persistence. Yeats would not go quietly toward death.

His physical condition at the time (affected by high blood pressure, congestive heart failure, and emphysema) was dreadful, as it appears in Sean O'Casey's alarming 1935 description of a Yeatsian coughing fit:

> The teeming thoughts of Yeats turned suddenly into himself as a tremulous stoppage of breath started an outburst of coughing that shook his big, protesting body, stretching his wide chest on a rack of straining effort to rid itself of congestion, or end the effort by ending life. His hands gripped the sides of his chair, his fine eyes began to stare and bulge, showing the storm within, as he leant back and bent forward to sway with the waves of stuffy contortion that were forcing resistant life from his fighting body. The whole stately dignity and courage of the poet was crinkling into a cough. He has caught an everlasting cold, thought Sean.

Threaded through all the stories of Yeatsian courage, credulity, hard work, intermittent affairs, and besetting illness are Foster's brief accounts of the astonishing volumes of poetry steadily published between 1915 and 1939. These include *The Wild Swans at Coole* (1919), *Michael Robartes and the Dancer* (1921), *Later Poems* (1922), *The Tower* (1928), *The Winding Stair* (1929), *Words for Music Perhaps and Other Poems* (1932), the *Collected Poems* (1933), *New Poems* (1938), and *Last Poems* (1939). No poet had a more ebullient old age than Yeats. Firmly possessed of Irish and classical myths, meaningful landscapes, an architectural Roman syntax, personally conceived symbols, and a formal repertoire unequalled in the twentieth century, Yeats found, in these later years, that words had come fully into his call.

His poetry turned away from cultural elegy; he had at last acceded, emotionally as well as intellectually, to the inevitable self-exhaustion of systems and cultures:

> Things thought too long can be no longer thought
> For beauty dies of beauty, worth of worth.

He could bid farewell, in the Shakespearean sonnet "Meru," to the cultures that had meant most to him: "Egypt and Greece good-bye, and good-bye, Rome!" Implicit in that line is a farewell to his own expiring Ascendancy culture. All apparent stasis is, he now knows, a pretense, an illusion; culture is always on the move because thought is innately restless and always hungry. Yeats recalls Keats's little town whose worshippers, once they leave, can never return:

> And, little town, thy streets for evermore
> Will silent be, and not a soul to tell
> Why thou art desolate, can e'er return.

Desolation is the inescapable endpoint of every departure—and yet thought cannot but keep departing and destroying:

> Civilisation is hooped together, brought
> Under a rule, under the semblance of peace
> By manifold illusion; but man's life is thought,
> And he, despite his terror, cannot cease
> Ravening through century after century,
> Ravening, raging, and uprooting that he may come
> Into the desolation of reality:

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Egypt and Greece good-bye, and
good-bye, Rome!

YEATS'S INNER LIFE—WHICH was even more interesting than his outer one—was a long pilgrimage from "manifold illusion" into "the desolation of reality." Yet the resilience of his creative spirit made him able to declare, in "Lapis Lazuli," that "All things fall and are built again, / And those that build them again are gay." It was his stoicism through trouble, anguish, and ill health that strengthened him to say, with the besieged and starving foot-soldiers of "The Black Tower," "Stand we on guard oath-bound!" It was his sensual relish, never abating, that persuaded him to close his last book—and therefore his entire oeuvre—with a poem impatiently brushing aside the imminent World War II in nostalgia for the warmth of love:

And maybe what they say is true
Of war and war's alarms,
But O that I were young again
And held her in my arms.

In "A Prayer for Old Age," Yeats had hoped that he would die "a foolish, passionate man," and his wish came true. Foolish in his barren obsession with Maud Gonne, perhaps; foolish in his occultism, certainly; foolish in his late philandering; foolish in his perverse choices (eliminating the war poets) for the notorious *Oxford Book of Modern Verse*; but perhaps not foolish in his faith that there was to be found some purity of motive that could not be assimilated to the doomed recurrence of historical butchery:

No matter what I said,
For wisdom is the property of the
dead,
A something incompatible with life;
and power,
Like everything that has the stain of
blood,
A property of the living; but no stain
Can come upon the visage of the
moon
When it has looked in glory from
a cloud.

He is perhaps remembering—in his image of the moon "when it has looked in glory from a cloud"—his first adored poet Shelley addressing the skylark:

All the earth and air
With thy voice is loud,
As when Night is bare,
From one lonely cloud
The moon rains out her beams—and
heaven is overflowed.

The overflowing self-forgetfulness of song generates Shelley's moon, as it does Yeats's.

We finish Yeats's late poetry surrounded by indelible symbols: the Tower, Byzantium, Cuchulain, Crazy Jane, Ancestral Houses, the Moon, Lapis Lazuli, Rocky Face, Sato's Sword, Leda and the Swan, the Second Coming. The poems embodying these potent inventions are the proof that Yeats managed to remain a passionate man even as he became an ironic and worldly one. He kept the foolishness to his life, and extended his life's inner tumult into a passionate and objective art. R. F. Foster's two volumes, in their grand progress and their amplitude of learning, provide the most circumstantial picture yet of the foolishness and the passion alike. ■

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DJIBOUTI DIARIST

Training Day

THERE ARE FEW PLACES ON earth where a Frenchman can shout expletives at U.S. Marines without incurring severe bodily harm. Arta Plage, a beach on the coast of Djibouti—a tiny former French colony in East Africa on the Gulf of Aden—is one of them, and Yannick Mounier is clearly enjoying himself. "Pump zee boat up," the stocky French Foreign Legion soldier yells as teams of Marines try to inflate rubber Zodiac dinghies. "You guys are so facking slow." Sporting a tight buzz cut and tattoos of two women on his left forearm, Mounier is dressed in a green camouflage T-shirt and wetsuit bottoms slung so low the Marines are given a glimpse of his plumber's crack. He walks up and down the beach as teams of six Marines stomp furiously on air pumps, racing to be the first to launch their boats into the Gulf of Aden. Carrying their boats down to the water, one team of Marines begins humming the "Lone Ranger" theme, but Gallic sarcasm soon crushes the levity. Persistent gusts on the Gulf of Aden blow the rubber boats hopelessly off course, and the Marines—rowing with wooden paddles—can't stay straight. Mounier scoffs at this aquatic display of U.S. geometry. "Maybe zees is what an American line looks like." Then, stretching his arm out straight away from shore, he continues, "But a French line looks like zees."

THE FRANCO-U.S. RELATIONSHIP MAY have hit rock bottom in the past year. Diplomats from the two countries are still waging war at the United Nations over the future of Iraq. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld reportedly even refuses to cross the street in Dupont Circle to dine with his neighbor, France's ambassador to the United States, despite repeated invitations from the Frenchman. Yet, here in Djibouti, *fraternité* is in the air, and the French are mixing it up with the "freedom fries" crowd.

IN FACT, AROUND THE WORLD, THE United States and France are cooperating much more closely in the war on terrorism than one might think; France's Foreign Legion has for decades been stationed in some of the world's roughest neighborhoods and has gained a great deal of counterterrorism experience. In Djibouti, I watched U.S. Marines attached to Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa—a new U.S. counterterrorism unit—take part in training exercises run by the Foreign Legion. Djibouti is particularly rough. French poet Arthur Rimbaud once described the hot and dusty country as "this awful colony," and, more than a century later, the oppressive heat and humidity remain the same. Djibouti, in short, is facking hell.

NOBODY IS PRETENDING THESE MARINE veterans of Afghanistan are going to learn that much from Mounier in a week. Instead, the training is designed to foster better relations between the United States and the French military and to break up the monotony of life at Camp Lemonier, the U.S. military's new home in Djibouti. Besides the water sports on the Gulf of Aden, the French have also trained the Marines on desert survival. They are taught the proper way to pack a camel and even how to butcher a goat for food.

ALTHOUGH DESIGNED TO MEND FENCES, the training has not been without its moments of international crisis. During the Iraq war, the French suspended all joint military exercises with the Americans in Djibouti. But antagonism did not filter down to ordinary soldiers that much. True, just days before U.S. forces crossed the border into Iraq, one Marine sergeant major in Kuwait rallied the troops not with slurs on Iraqis but by telling French jokes. "Did you hear about the new French tank? It's got sixteen gears, all of them reverse," he said. And, after ingesting too much of the Gulf of Aden during grueling swim drills, one Marine in this training stumbled onto the beach and vomited on a flagpole where the French tri-color flag was waving. But, overall, the two countries' grunts work well together in Djibouti. In fact, Mounier—no surrender monkey he—becomes almost a fatherly figure to a group of Marines. After they flail in the wind for a few minutes, all the while barking at each other, Mounier brings the boats together for a pep talk. "In zee boat, only one speaks. Zat is zee chief. Everyone else, shut your facking box!"

WITH THE WIND CONTINUING TO WHIP up, it's time for the air-raid drill. The idea is for the Marines to capsize their boats and hide underneath the hull in the water, standard procedure if an enemy plane began taking shots at them. After three short blasts on the whistle around his neck, Mounier begins the drill. "Everybody under zee boat! Quickly!" Yet the Marines struggle to pull the boats over their heads, making them machine-gun fodder. Mounier looks on with disgust: "You are all dead." The results are generally better on the second try, yet one of the teams still can't get it right. Failing to capsize their boat, five of the six Marines jump overboard, leaving one of their comrades holding on to the side, single-handedly trying to overturn the boat. Driving up alongside the hapless crew, Mounier unloads on them. "You are all dead!" he shouts. "Zee plane has shot your whole facking face off!" As if frightened by the Frenchman, a school of flying fish suddenly jumps through the air, whizzing by the sodden Marines.

THE LAST TRIAL IS A RACE BACK TO THE beach, and the legionnaire throws in an added incentive: The team finishing last will be subjected to more capsize drills. The Marines struggle against wind and waves to make headway back to shore, yet the progress is halting. Lieutenant Colonel Ken Plummer, Task Force-Horn of Africa's training officer, casts a steely eye on his panting troops: "Kinda looks like *Ben Hur*."

MOUNIER SMILES AS HE WATCHES THE scene from his motorized boat. Just then, an enormous spotted whale shark swims up alongside the boat. With the Marines plodding home and some time to kill, Mounier decides it's time to play Jacques Cousteau. With a grin, he pulls up his wetsuit and plunges into the water, grabbing hold of the shark's top fin. He straddles the shark's back and rides the fish for 15 yards, until it plunges below the surface of the water. Un-facking believable.

MARK MAZZETTI

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Economic Growth—the Essence of Sustainable Development

Terry L. Anderson is the Martin and Illie Anderson Senior Fellow at the Hoover Institution. Laura E. Huggins is a research fellow at the Hoover Institution.

Thirty years ago, a group of academics known as the Club of Rome put forth the "limits to growth" theory, predicting disaster for humankind unless natural resource–depleting economic and technological progress were abandoned. This gloom-and-doom theory has been resurrected under the guise of sustainable development, calling for changes in virtually every aspect of our consumption and production.

"Sustainability," a seductive though vague term, argues that resource use today should leave future generations at least as well off as current generations. Of course nobody wants to make future generations poorer and less healthy, but this definition provides no guidance for how this result can be avoided. There is no way to know what resource use is acceptable today and no way to know what future generations may desire. Yet because of its deceptive simplicity, sustainability is applied to anything from agricultural practices to energy use to mining.

Implicit in the calls for sustainable development are two fundamental assumptions. The first is that we are running out of resources, thus leaving future generations with less; the second is that market processes are the cause of these depletions. But in fact, several studies offer evidence suggesting the opposite.

Resources are becoming less, not more, scarce. Agricultural yields for rice, corn, and wheat have increased for decades. Known reserves of oil, natural gas, and coal have been expanding, and accessible stocks of aluminum, zinc, iron, and copper have grown as technology develops more-conservative production techniques and the price mechanism encourages exploration and new discoveries of underground reserves. Moreover, life expectancy, housing, nutrition, and education levels are improving in both the developed and the developing world. In short, the prosperity we enjoy today is leaving future generations better off, not worse off.

How can this be? Sustainable development, if it can be defined as a call to maximize human welfare, is only possible in a legal system where property rights ensure market operability. Property rights (when well defined, enforced, and transferable) provide the structure that encourages development, innovation, conservation, and discovery of new resources. Growth, and increasing wealth through these methods, leads to improved environmental quality by raising demands for it and by providing the wherewithal to meet these demands. In this context, **economic growth is not the antithesis of sustainable development; it is the essence of it.** Therefore, how we deal with the evolution and protection of property rights in the future will determine not only how free and prosperous we are but also how much environmental quality we enjoy.

Sustainable development stems from sustainable institutions—political and economic systems based on secure property rights and the rule of law. Doomsayers, however, continue to profess, as they have since Thomas Malthus, that exponential economic growth and consumption will ultimately run up against resource limits. They call for more government regulation to stop this growth. If their calls are successful, we will have neither sustainable growth nor sustainable improvements in environmental quality. It is not resources that are too scarce but the institutions that ensure human freedom. Only by sustaining those institutions will we be able to sustain development and advance environmental quality—only then can we have our environmental cake and eat it too!

—Terry L. Anderson and Laura E. Huggins

Paid for by the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.

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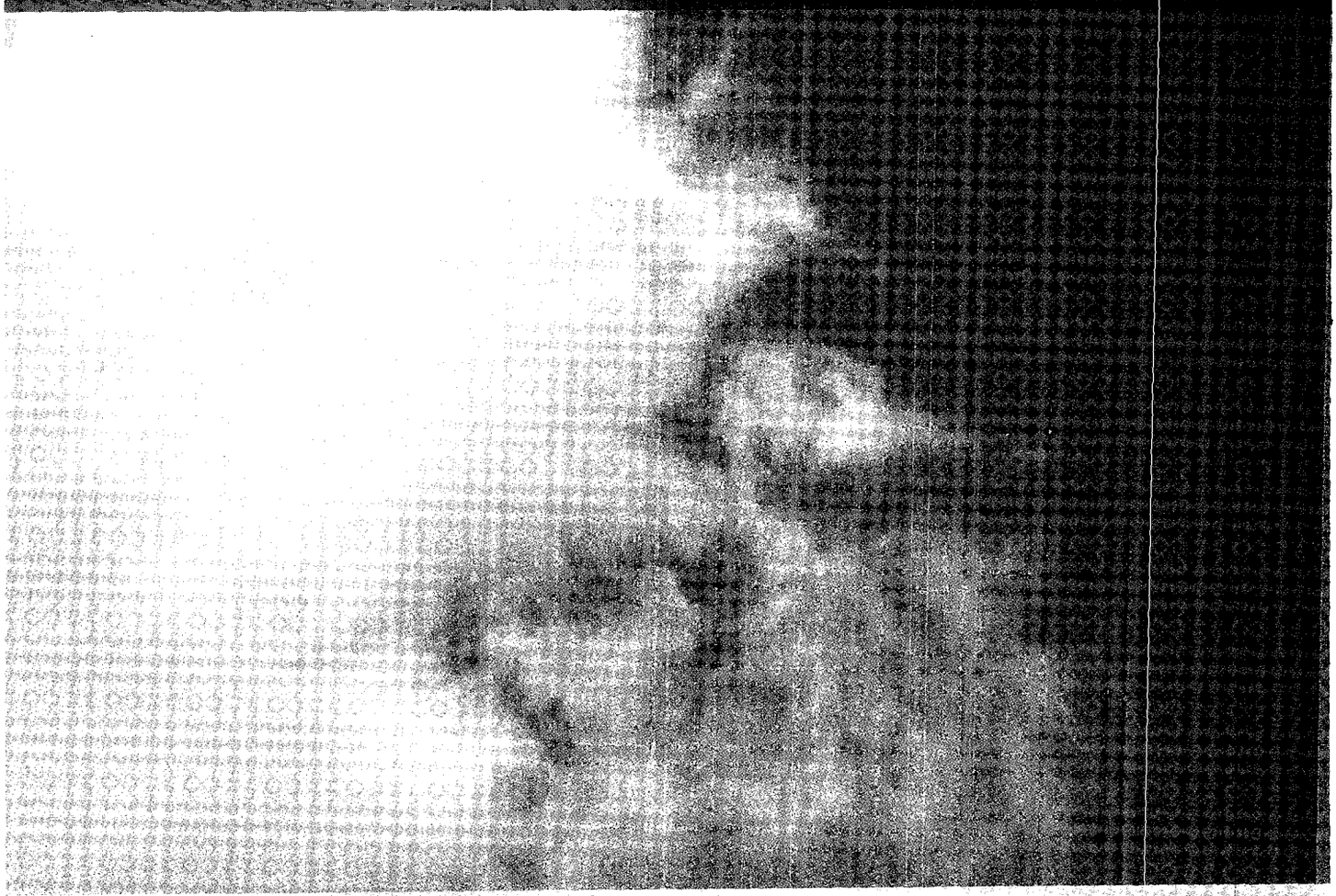
CLOUD THE ISSUE



OR CLEAR THE AIR?

The issue of global warming has given rise to heated debate. Is the burning of fossil fuels and increased concentration of carbon dioxide in the air a serious threat or just a lot of hot air? Shell believes that action needs to be taken now, both

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by companies and their customers. We are actively managing greenhouse gas emissions in our worldwide operations such that by 2010 they are still 5% or more below 1990 levels, even while we grow our business. We are also working to increase the supply of natural gas, a cleaner option for electricity generation and home heating, and offering alternative energy sources such as solar, hydrogen and wind power. It's all part of our commitment to contribute to

IS THERE A CHOICE?

sustainable development, balancing economic progress with environmental care and social responsibility. Solutions for the future won't come easily, particularly in today's climate, but you can't find them if you don't keep looking.

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